Saturday Review of Literature

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Space travel — something revolutionary about to happen to the human spirit. *(See page 9)*

Science Fiction & Fantasy - 1949

BY FLETCHER PRATT

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More People want More Books for Christmas in 1949!

In the latest of its surveys on what people would like for Christmas, Sales Management Magazine has discovered that more men and women hope to receive books as holiday gifts in 1949 than ever before.

Here are some of the changes in Americans' Christmas-gift wishes as revealed by this year's survey:*

(Figure indicates change this year in per-cent of total number of those queried who want each kind of gift)

MEN WANT		WOMEN WANT
+ 5%	**Books**	+ 3%
+ 2%	*Radio TV*	— 1%
+ 1%	*Sporting Goods*	+ 1%
—15%	*Wearing Apparel*	— 9%
— 8%	*Jewelry*	— 6%
— 4%	*Household Goods*	— 6%

Buy GIVE-A-BOOK CERTIFICATES *Wherever You See This Emblem*

*Survey by National Analysts, Inc.

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Publishers of Fine Books for over Four Centuries

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

AND JOSEPH also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY, Luke 2: 4-20, as it has been told and read from *Oxford Bibles* since 1675.

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TRADE Winds

THE CHRISTMAS LITERARY SCENE

• • In San Diego, Richard Barbour, a leading public-school official, estimated that of the 730 million books printed in America last year, 720 million were comic books.

• • In New York, Harper announced a book of personal recollections by General Mark Clark. Statisticians figure that Harper now has more generals than the Pentagon Building.

• • In Milwaukee, city fathers helped along the cause of literature by hanging up on City Hall an electric sign that read "Register: Great Books." In trudged a lady to demand, "Is this where I register my great books? I've got a complete one-volume Shakespeare and a signed copy of 'Memoirs of Hecate County.'"

• • In Manhattan, Ziff-Davis prepared to turn over most of their trade-book department to Prentice-Hall, Harry Abrams organized a new firm to publish fine art books, Doubleday signed up for three floors in the new building under construction at 57th St. and Madison, John O'Connor became a director of the BOMC, and *Reader's Digest* disclosed plans for a book service of its own. It contemplates quarterly publication of a volume that will contain generous abridgments of three books at a clip—preferably two big sellers and one "discovery"—for sale exclusively by mail to subscribers to the *Digest*.

• • In Tacoma, Walter Brady offered this addition to the Sherlock Holmes saga: "The good Sherlock observed one morning, 'Ah, Dr. Watson, still wearing your winter underwear, eh?' 'Incredible,' marveled Watson. 'How did you deduce that?' 'Elementary, my dear doctor,' said Holmes. 'In the first place, you forgot to put on your pants.'"

• • In Hamburg, Karl Baedeker, fifth-generation head of the guidebook dynasty, announced a new line of Baedekers for the spring, first since the old Leipzig headquarters of the firm were pulverized by bombs during the war. Young Baedeker promised a "new look" for his productions. "Yesterday's tourist," he commented, "who used to march from the station to the market place and on to the museum, like a pilgrim fulfiling his vow, is a thing of the past."

• • In the *Harvard Law Review*, Richard Marshall writes that the late Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes read two books or more a week except when court was in session, and made notes in his diary about more than 5,000 different volumes! One of the reasons he had so much time for books was that he seldom bothered reading a newspaper—and when he did, confined himself to one a day. He read Freud in German in 1915, and Proust in French in 1920. When his eyes began to go back on him his secretaries read aloud to him. Two of the secretaries, incidentally, were Alger and Donald Hiss.

• • In New York, Bernard Geis, who has a standing order with a local bookstore for one copy each of every new cook book, was reasonably startled to receive last week Peter Arno's "Sizzling Platter."

• • In Hartford, the *Courant* chose twenty-four-year-old Edward Parone as its new literary editor.

• • In Princeton, the influence of the recent rash of "realistic" and historical novels was clearly discernible in the following paragraph, reprinted verbatim from the *Daily Princetonian* of October 20:

> Can you top this? Last week a student was called before the dean for violation of the sex-after-seven ruling. Asked if he had had a girl in his room after hours, he replied in the affirmative. "Was it for an immoral purpose?" queried the dean. "Certainly not," retorted the student. "I am impotent." The dean could think of no reply, and the student is now loose upon the campus.

Shades of Anthony Comstock! . . .

• • In the Barnes and Noble book store, Elsa Lichtenstein reports that a dissatisfied secretarial student returned for credit a copy of Herman Melville's "Typee." "I thought it said *'Typing,'*" she explained. Another student asked for Virgil's Adenoids. And as if that wasn't enough for a single day, a third party appeared to exchange a book called "Better Diction." "I don't think this can do me much good any more," he sighed. "I just had all my teeth pulled."

• • In a Westchester town, Vanguard's Guy Henle has a friend named Dunham, who ran for supervisor in the November election. His six-year-old son got into the spirit of the campaign and distributed leaflets at a furious pace. Dunham was a Democrat, however, and warned his son that his chances were virtually nil in this preponderantly Republican district. "You mean," said the crestfallen six-year-old, "Truman might still be President?"

• • At Macmillan's, a bookseller glanced through a copy of Stephen Swift's "The Cardinal's Story" and remarked, "This is the best Mindszenty book I've seen this week."

• • In California, *Fortnight* magazine reported the arrival of Douglas Black, president of Doubleday and a "bevy of the firm's top brass," who "moved up and down the state wooing authors and cooing at booksellers." In San Francisco, as a matter of fact, Doug Black's attempt to coo into a microphone backfired. Asked to name the firm's newest juveniles, his mind went blank, and he stammered the name of Charlotte Jackson's "Mercy Hicks," published by Dodd, Mead.

• • In New York, the *Commonweal*, "a review of literature, the arts, and public affairs, edited by Catholic laymen," celebrated its silver jubilee with a banner issue that should become a collector's item. Contributors include Jacques Maritain, Thomas Merton, and George N. Shuster.

• • In Boston, Alice Dixon Bond defined a successful author as "one who

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can make glaring mistakes in grammar and thereby cause them to come into good usage." In Ottawa, Ill., Colonel Duffy advised a humorist, "The only way you can get your stuff laughed at is to read it to a girl who has dimples." And in Hollywood, a producer told a famous novelist, "I've read worse books in my time—but you wrote all of them."

• • In Minneapolis, popular columnist Cedric Adams came up with another of his why-didn't-anybody-think-of-this-before suggestions: standard telephone numbers for fire and police departments in every city, town, and hamlet in the nation. He adds, "Let teachers pound these numbers into the noggins of the young as they do the multiplication table. Could be a help."

• • In Berkeley, physicist Vern O. Knudsen deflated bathroom tenors, including the writer of this column, by warning, "Don't be fooled by the resonance of your singing voice in the shower. The average American bathroom, with its smooth, finished surfaces, does an unusually good job of reflecting low-frequency tones—the ones that sound big and melodious."

• • In Greensboro, N. C., a cannibalistic typesetter on the *Daily News* caused an item on the book page to read "Simon and Schuster have published 'My Little Golden Dictionary' for children. Dr. Mary Reed and Edith Osswald ate the authors and Richard Scarry the illustrator." And the *Raymond* (Wash.) *Herald* carried its tell-the-people-the-facts technique rather to an extreme by reporting, "When their car overturned two young authors were injured, Miss Thompson about the face, and Miss Cromwell in the back seat."

• • And now comes the time to wish you all the usual Holiday greetings, doubled and redoubled, and wind up the column with the story of a publisher who gave his little boy a fountain pen for Christmas. The lad soon came running with ink-stained fingers to report. "Daddy! My pen's nose is bleeding." —BENNETT CERF.

Winter Scene

By Dorothy Alyea

IN the uncanny winter light
When earth is staring at the sky
With that white face that loses grace
When lake and river shut their eye

All trace of men has gone to earth,
Until, with wings upon the air
Too low, too freighted with the snow,
Descends the traveler.

An Announcement of Interest to

WRITING CRAFTSMEN

"JACK AND JILL" AWARDS

First Award $1,000. Second Award $750.

ESTABLISHED BY *The Curtis Publishing Company* IN THE INTEREST OF PRODUCING GOOD JUVENILE FICTION. THE AWARDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR THE TWO *Best Unpublished Magazine Serials* RECEIVED IN A SERIAL STORY CONTEST ENDING JUNE 1st 1950

What Makes a Good Child's Story?

The experience of editing the Nation's leading children's magazine for more than a decade has convinced the editors of JACK *and* JILL that a good child's story has all the qualities of a good adult story. Above everything, it will hold the attention of its readers. It may achieve this result by means of humor, pathos, adventure or excitement.

The JACK *and* JILL awards seek to improve the quality and standards of all children's magazine stories by encouraging authors to produce serials carefully written for young readers.

Writers desiring to enter this competition may secure a copy of the complete rules by addressing a request to the Editor, JACK *and* JILL *Magazine, The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia 5, Pennsylvania.*

☞ Manuscripts must be postmarked not later than midnight May 31, 1950

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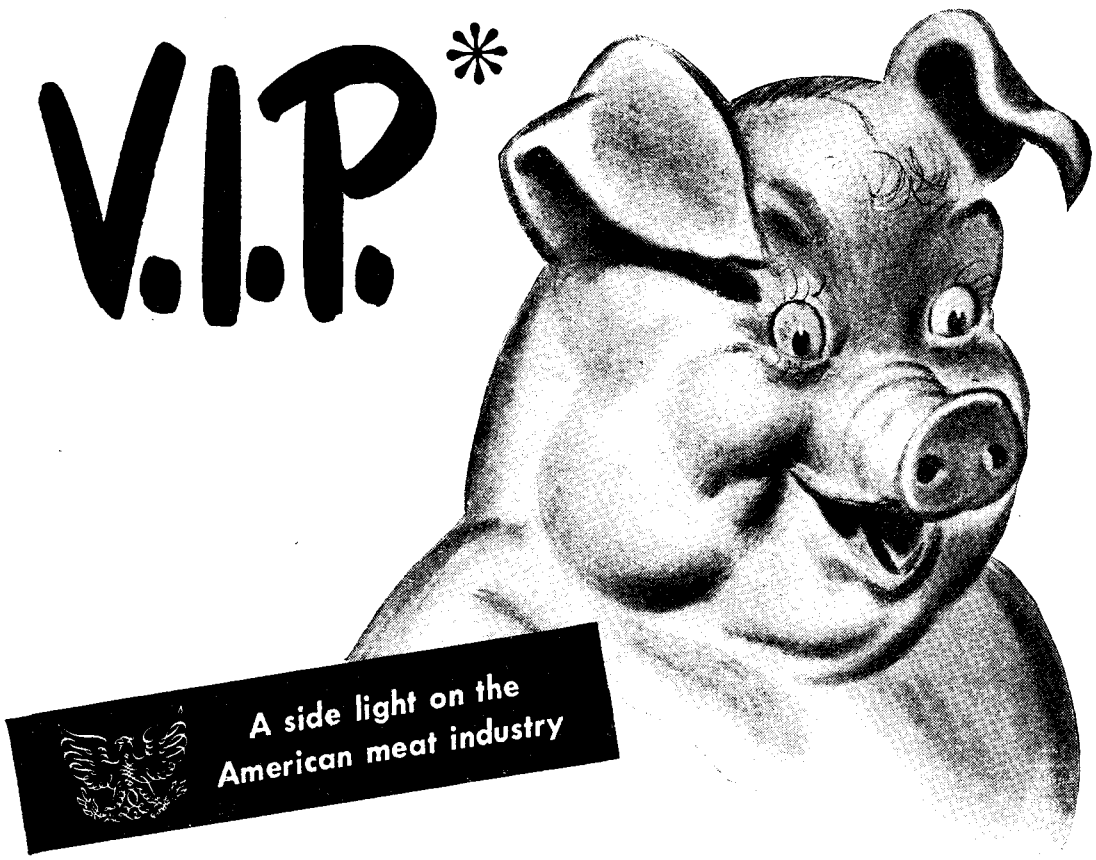
V.I.P.*



A side light on the American meat industry

*The initials stand for the *Very Important Porker*, and, from wherever you sit, the pig is a very important critter indeed.

Economists would observe that the pig (1) provides the principal medium through which millions of American farmers market their annual multi-billion-bushel corn crop; (2) gives steady work to an army of people in packing plants and retail stores.

Nutritionists praise the pig for converting the food values of forage and crude feed grains (much of which is not edible by man) into enough high-quality protein to provide one-half of the nation's meat meals. Moreover, pork is man's richest natural source of essential vitamin B_1 (thiamine).

Physicians depend upon the number of pigs that pass through the nation's packing plants for many vital medicinal products. Among these are glandular products such as

insulin, epinephrine, thyroid and pituitary extract. (ACTH, from the pituitaries of pigs; though still about as rare as radium, has been called the medicinal discovery of the century.)

To the meat packer, the pig is "everything but the squeal," but to most people it supplies the pork chops, ham, bacon and sausage they like to see on the platter in front of them—the more often the better.

American Meat Institute

Headquarters, Chicago • *Members throughout the U. S.*

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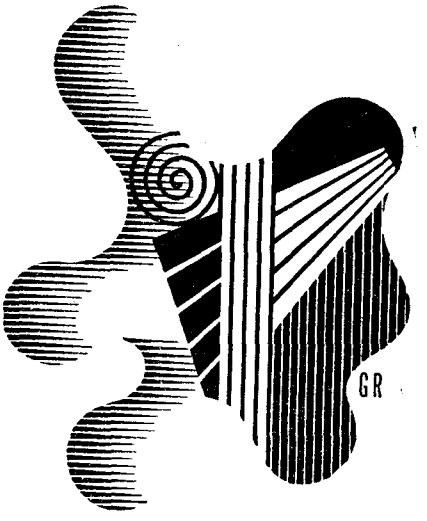
The Saturday Review of Literature

Science Fiction & Fantasy—1949

FLETCHER PRATT

WHEN the end of World War II made paper for book publishing available to anyone who wished to invest in so irrational an enterprise, something new came over the literary horizon. Tentatively, then with accelerating tempo, there began to appear a series of books whose jackets bore pictures of Adonis-like youths clad in airtight coveralls surmounted by glass bubbles from which stubby radio aerials projected. They were usually accompanied by the female of the species, a damsel wearing an ornamented bra, a pair of shorts and boots halfway up the calf. Both were commonly armed with pistols of strange design, and not infrequently accompanied by monsters.

They are the people of space, refugees from the pulps. The books that chronicle their adventures are published by houses of unfamiliar names from such places as Providence, Sauk City, Wis., and Reading, Pa. Few of these books reached the regular bookstores at first and fewer still were noticed by the reviews. But old-line publishers who were moved to investigate this phenomenon discovered that these books were selling in quite unprecedented quantities to a public which had seldom or never bought books before but whose devotion to this form literally knew no bounds. This public has bought at $6 each a large number of copies of the "Checklist of Fantastic Literature,"* which is merely a directory of books in the field, and the world "completer" is well known in the trade to designate a reader so avid that he must buy a copy of every single book of the kind published. One of the regular publishers, desirous of experimenting inexpensively with this form of literature, offered to take some of a specialist publisher's remainders for



reissue under the name of the larger house. "Remainders?" was the reply. "Listen, when one of our books gets down to where it would be a remainder it becomes a rare book and we charge double for it."

The big publisher was presently issuing a couple of science-fiction volumes on his own account. So have others; by 1949 at least seven of the familiar houses have science-fiction titles on their lists and more are in prospect. The prediction that the form would replace the detective story as the dominant type of escape literature has moved measurably toward realization.

There are sound reasons for this. One is on the negative side—the exhaustion of the detective story's somewhat limited possibilities of variation. There are simply not enough new ways in which people can be murdered or the murder discovered to support a form which depends upon surprise for its major effects. In science fiction "anything can happen and usually does." One reason is positive—the fact that atom smashers and planes moving faster than sound are daily in the news and fiction is merely fulfilling its ancient function of reflecting the interests of the people who read it.

To this basic pattern of interest science fiction adds another—the fascination of new frontiers for a world where there are no more unknowns to be explored. When Voltaire wrote his "Micromegas," the visitants from another planet had to be accepted *pro forma*; they were anthropomorphic mouthpieces for ideas, like the gods of the "Iliad." But today the professors tell us that we can start building the moon rocket tomorrow (what it will look like and what it can expect to find are admirably described in "The Conquest of Space," by Willy Ley, with paintings by Chesley Bonestell, reviewed on page 9 of this issue) and the vehicle for Mars next week if someone will put up the money. It is as logical that fiction should explore what lies beyond this new horizon as it was for Chateaubriand to project his imagination into the jungles of Louisiana. No less than eight of this year's crop of science-fiction novels are what is known in the trade as "space operas"—books built round the theme of interplanetary travel.*

Comparison of these works yields some matters of interest. The theory of all but two of the writers is that what lies beyond the horizon of the heavens is war—against races formidably armed and so utterly alien to our own thought patterns that no compromise with them is possible. This no doubt represents less a judg-

*CHECKLIST OF FANTASTIC LITERATURE. Edited by E. F. Bleiler. Chicago: Shasta Publishers. 452 pp. $6.

*WHAT MAD UNIVERSE. By Frederic Brown. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 255 pp. $2.50.

JOHN CARSTAIRS: Space Detective. By Frank Belknap Long. New York: Frederick Fell. 264 pp. $2.50.

THE HUMANOIDS. By Jack Williamson. New York: Simon & Schuster. 239 pp. $2.

PATTERN FOR CONQUEST. By George O. Smith. New York: Gnome Press. 252 pp. $2.50.

THE INCREDIBLE PLANET. By John W. Campbell, Jr. Reading, Pa.: Fantasy Press. 344 pp. $3.

THE LAST SPACE SHIP. By Murray Leinster. New York: Frederick Fell. 239 pp. $2.50.

THE KID FROM MARS. By Oscar J. Friend. New York: Frederick Fell. 270 pp. $2.50.

THE STAR KINGS. By Edmond Hamilton. New York: Frederick Fell. 260 pp. $2.50.

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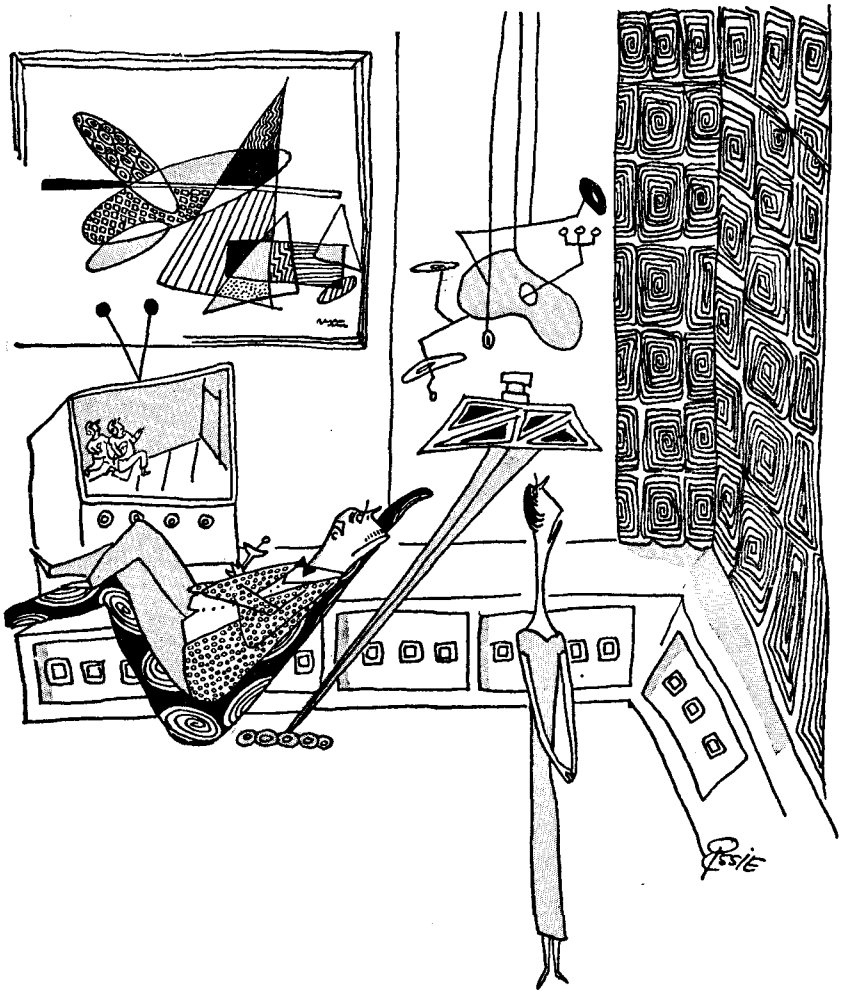

"I can't live with you any longer, George—you're not *functional*."

ment than a convention; five of the eight books mentioned are rewrites and extensions of stories which have already appeared in the pulps, whose readers respond only to shock treatment. It is probably more significant that all but one of the eight ("The Kid from Mars," a rather heavy attempt to combine humor with science fiction) describe a contact which is not interplanetary but interstellar. For their vehicles to cover the necessary distances in the necessary times, the writers have been forced to adopt a common pulp convention of an "overdrive" or "space-warp," which will carry a physical object through space at many times the speed of light. Now the best scientific knowledge we possess says that an object traveling at such a velocity would have infinite mass and as a result its very existence would cause the universe to collapse. In spite of their professed devotion to science, the writers who use this device are evidently producing pure fantasy, escape literature. It may also be significant that psychiatrists are among the leading devotees of science fiction, and almost invariably they take theirs in the form of space opera.

Parenthetically, in the group of escape stories, which may be expanded to include the two "time travel" books of 1949,* there are a few other generally accepted conventions that may slow up the reader exposed to this type of literature for the first time. In space opera money is usually expressed in "credits" representing work hours. Time travel in the physical body by means of a ray or a machine is a practical possibility. So is telepathy, including telepathy between races. Tractor and pressor beams or rays that can push or pull matter are common. There is a form of matter known as "contraterrene," presumably with the neutrons of the atom revolving around the electrons instead of the arrangement known to us; it yields violent atomic explosions when coming into contact with our type of matter.

Like the overdrive and the ability of the heroes of these stories to invent on the spur of the moment whatever technical device is necessary for victory over the alien monstrosities, these conventional appurtenances patently represent wish-fulfilment dreams. So does the whole story in the straight fantasy, without any scientific element, of L. Ron Hubbard's "Triton,"* which is, by the way, about as bad a pure fairy tale as the year has produced. But one of the most important features of the whole science-fiction-fantasy literature is that it has no general convention in favor of wish-fulfilment or of escape either. If the fantasy element be sufficient to entertain the reader, the author is permitted to employ any thematic material he desires for the discussion of any subject that falls upon his attention.

Thus even among the strict space operas there is often some fairly serious consideration of ideas underlying the pulp approach and the wild adventures. Williamson's "The Humanoids" is an adventure story; it is also almost incredibly a justification of Korzybski's semantics. George O. Smith's "Pattern for Conquest" examines the consequences of an interplanetary war whose result is tactically unfavorable to the earth and finds they may not be so grim as we imagine. In Frederic Brown's "What Mad Universe" the basic theme, treated lightly and even humorously, is the Berkleyan subjective world. Two books of the recent crop both outside the space-opera category,† consider that the struggle between East and West can never be resolved but in the face of some common danger more urgent than that which faced both in 1941-45. They reach, without any hint of plagiarism, curiously similar solutions. "The Five Lives of Robert Jordan" in Nelson Bond's "The Thirty-First of February"‡ takes up the theme of Nietzschean eternal recurrence in a manner which would be impossible for the more ordinary forms of fiction.

BUT if the use of science-fiction fantasy has enabled light writers occasionally to catch a heavy idea by the tail without damage either to the reader's power of concentration or his ego, it has also placed in the hands of the serious writer an unsurpassed weapon for attacking in fictive form matters hitherto reserved for more ponderous treatment. It is important and not alone because of wider readership, for fiction possesses the capacity unknown to any other type of

*SEVEN OUT OF TIME. By Arthur Leo Zagat. Reading, Pa.: Fantasy Press. 240 pp. $3.

EXILES OF TIME. By Nelson Bond. Philadelphia: Prime Press. 183 pp. $2.50.

*TRITON. By L. Ron Hubbard. Los Angeles: Fantasy Publishing Co. 172 pp. $3.

†THE FLYING SAUCER. By Bernard Newman. To be published January 24 by The Macmillan Co., New York.

THE BIG EYE. By Max Erhlich. New York: Doubleday & Co. 221 pp. $2.50.

‡THE THIRTY-FIRST OF FEBRUARY. By Nelson Bond. New York: Gnome Press. 272 pp. $3.

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literature of demonstrating the impact of ideas on the living individual. It is no accident that two of the novels rated among the most distinguished of the year by general critical standards conform very strictly to the definition of science fiction and another to the requirements of pure fantasy.

Nothing George Orwell could have said in any other way would have been half so effective as the picture of the totalitarian state in "Nineteen Eighty-Four,"* where the whole thing is put into motion. It differs from the stories that have come out of the pulps in emotional intensity, in the pains given characterization, and in the sheer good writing which tells so much by implication. But the framework is of a type long familiar to science-fiction readers, and the care with which the details of "newspeak" and the master office building are worked out is a common device to achieve the suspension of disbelief in the pulps. Indeed, it is a necessary device; the failure of Hubbard's "Triton" is that there is no real logical accord established between the two parts of the story.

The concept and basic device of George R. Stewart's "Earth Abides"† are also familiar to science-fiction

(Continued on page 23)

*NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR. By George Orwell. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 314 pp. $3.

†EARTH ABIDES. By George R. Stewart. New York: Random House. 373 pp. $3.

Baedeker of the Solar System

·ROBERT A. HEINLEIN

IN GREAT secrecy, at least a full generation before it was expected, atomic energy was dumped on an unprepared world; we are still floundering.

There is another revolutionary thing about to happen to the human spirit. Space travel. . . .

Most of us are equally unprepared for space travel. Despite Alley Oop's adventures on the moon, despite the V-2, the Orson Welles broadcast, despite many serious non-fiction books and articles and countless pulp magazine stories, the well-known man-in-the-street does not believe in it, down inside. He thinks of it, if at all, as an interesting but unimportant change which may affect his grandchildren. But it will affect *him* more than has the atom bomb. Again, he will not be prepared for it. "The Conquest of Space"* is an opportunity to get emotionally braced for it.

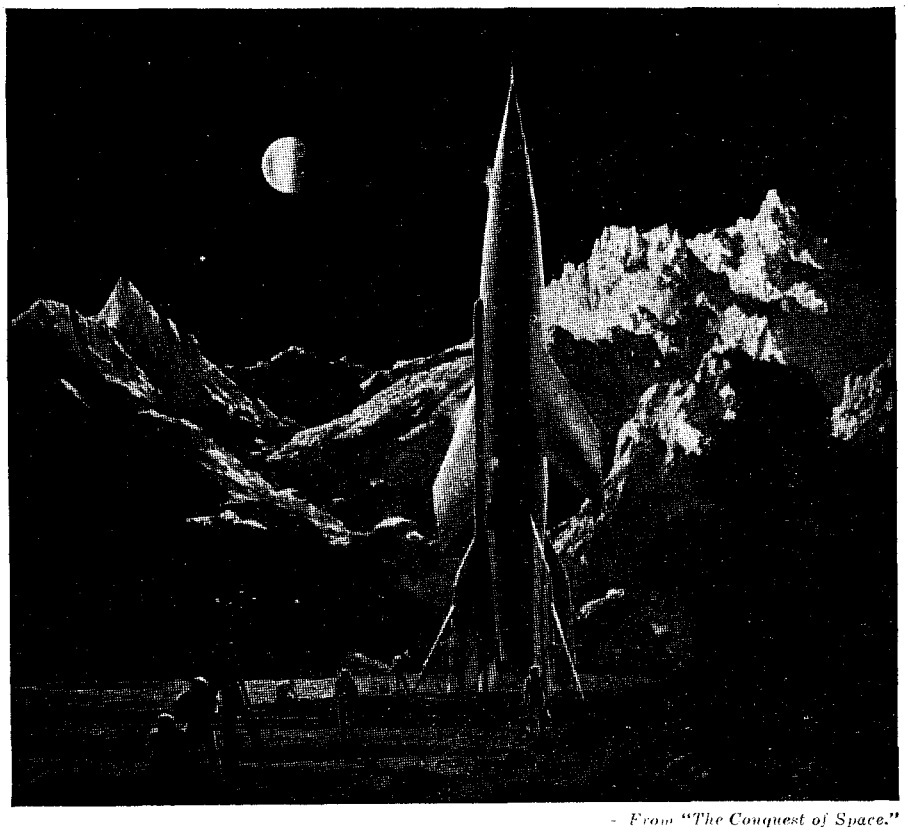
The text, by Willy Ley, is an elementary exposition of rockets and space travel combined with a "Baedeker" of the solar system, all lavishly illustrated with reproductions of oil paintings by Chesley Bonestell. Until the first rocket lands on the moon, this book is the next best thing to interplanetary flight. The illustrations, most of them nearly as large as this page, portray everything from a rocket ship being fueled on earth to extraordinary pictures of Saturn from its largest satellite, or a double canal on Mars as it appears from a nearby hill. There are fifty-eight such plates, twenty-three of them in color.

They are not imaginative fantasies, but realistic renderings, correct in scientific detail; they have the same authenticity as restorations of dinosaurs—and for the same reasons. Mr. Bonestell brings to this work unique training and genius. He was first an architect, with that discipline's emphasis on perspective and mathematical correctness; he shifted to oil painting and gained command of that medium, then shifted to "special-effects" painting for motion pictures, where the purpose is to paint with such photographic exactness that a painted "mat shot" will be accepted as real. Add to this that he is a skilled amateur astronomer, passionate for truth.

No other painter alive or dead could paint these pictures. Many of them are being used in encyclopedias, others hang in astronomical observatories. An astrophysicist passed around some Kodachrome photographs of these pictures at a gathering of professional people, all of whom were sophisticated in rocketry and astronomy. They reached the startling, inescapable (but quite incorrect) conclusion that interplanetary flight had already been accomplished—apparently in secret, like the atom bomb. But these pictures are not only realistic and convincing; they are also extraordinarily beautiful works of art. The publishers should issue the color plates as separate sheets for framing to save us from taking a razor blade to a fine volume.

Willy Ley is both a well-known popularizer of science and an engineer—a rocket engineer, with practical experience spanning a quarter of a century. He writes with wit and gentle humor, and has a happy ability for stating technical facts so simply that a child may understand, yet an expert will be neither bored nor annoyed. You are likely to want to know more about rocket ships; if so,

*THE CONQUEST OF SPACE. By Chesley Bonestell and Willy Ley. New York: The Viking Press. 160 pp. $3.95.



From "The Conquest of Space."

Space ship poised for return from moon to earth—tail-down as in landing.

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turn to Mr. Ley's "Rockets and Space Travel" of two years ago, which is more detailed and technical, but still absorbing and readable.

Children will take to this book as eagerly as adults, for it speaks of far journeys to romantic places. Since children will read it, it may be just as well that it does not speak of the military necessity which is hustling us, willy-nilly, into the era of space flight.

Yet the military significance can never be forgotten by our unhappy generation. The space ship will be to the next fifty years what the airplane has been to the last. If you are one who still thinks space travel preposterous, seek out this year's report of the Secretary of Defense. In years to come the greatest strategic fact will be that it is many times easier to launch an attack from the moon to the earth than vice versa.

If you want to prepare yourself for this strange age we are rushing into, Messrs. Bonestell and Ley offer you a breathtakingly beautiful yet factual means.

Robert A. Heinlein, a mechanical engineer by profession, is also known as a prolific and popular writer of science-fiction.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 340

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 340 will be found in the next issue.

PABIIBGZ TGW TUNLX

TKX EBDX ETNWTGNF:

RHN ATOX MH WHNUEX

MAX WHLX TL MAX

LXGLBUBEBMBXL WXVEBGX.

—ATKKBXM UXXVAXK

LMHPX.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 339

What the Puritans gave the world was not thought, but action.

—Wendell Phillips.

U. S. A. *When the Pulitzer Prize judges weigh the merits of the books on American history published during 1949 they will in all likelihood give respectful attention to the first of the volumes reviewed below: Samuel Flagg Bemis's "John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy." This is not a biography in the strict sense but a series of exhaustively researched monographs about the important work participated in by a pioneer American diplomatist. . . . One of the first brain-trusters, Raymond Moley offers vivid and often revealing portraits of politicians he has known in another new book, "Twenty-Seven Masters of Politics." . . . Irving Howe's and B. J. Widick's "The U. A. W. and Walter Reuther"* (see page 12) *is one of an important trio dealing with labor. The others, Saul Alinsky's "John L. Lewis" and Aleine Austin's "The Labor Story," will be reviewed soon.*

Epoch-Making Diplomatist

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. By Samuel Flagg Bemis. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 588 pp. $7.50.

By Allan Nevins

IN 1817 John Quincy Adams, discussing the Florida question in London with Lord Castlereagh, remarked: "If Spain would but for one moment be rational with us, we could easily come to an accommodation with her." This one-sided view was too much for Castlereagh. "I must admit that Spain is not the easiest of parties to concede," he commented, "and I may say the same for the United States." Adams had a ready retort. "There can be no better judge of stubbornness and compliance," he sarcastically responded, "than a party so very easy and accommodating as Great Britain."

In this exchange appear some of the qualities that made J. Q. Adams a great diplomatist: his pride of country, belief that the United States was always right, certainty that all the stubbornness was on the other side, and tart wit. The Adams family, irritable, vain, hot-tempered, and prejudiced, had many faults; J. Q. Adams, the testiest, sharpest-tongued, and most exasperating of them all, had his full share. But his very faults contributed to make him a redoubtable leader in guiding our foreign policy.

With his faults went great virtues: a piercing vision of the future of the country, a sense of Manifest Destiny ("The whole continent of North America appears to be *destined by Divine Providence* to be peopled by one *nation*," he wrote his father in 1811), his dogged pertinacity as a negotiator, his instinct for underlying principles. This last was specially important. Mr. Bemis gives us a list of the fourteen "fundamentals" on which American foreign policy came to rest in Adams's time. It appears that Adams strengthened them all, while some of them he invented. He followed the first generation of national leaders in striving for freedom of the seas and freedom of trade and navigation; he followed Jefferson and others in his dream of continental expansion; he followed Henry Clay on the road to Pan-Americanism. He accepted (much too reluctantly) the British principle of the suppression of the slave trade. His own genius struck off the principle that the New World was no longer subject to colonization from the Old. Non-intervention in American affairs, self-determination of American peoples, the right of expatriation and naturalization in America—these principles he asserted with tenacious vigor.

Mr. Bemis in this thick but lively volume describes Adams's practical work in foreign fields with a much fuller use of sources than any predecessor. He begins with the ministry to the Netherlands, when Adams was only twenty-seven, and with his service as Senator a little later in voting for the Embargo and rallying the Boston Federalists to support Jefferson's Chesapeake policy. Then Adams went as minister to Russia, where he accomplished long-felt results in promoting commerce and amity; was one of the five commissioners to make peace with Britain at Ghent, where he shared with Gallatin the laboring oar; was promoted to the legation in London, with little of note to do, and finally occupied the State Department

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for eight crowded years. To the secretaryship Mr. Bemis gives about half the book. Every available foreign archive has been searched; the abundant printed materials have been thoroughly conned and the State Department ransacked; while by some magic Mr. Bemis has even gained the use of the carefully guarded papers of the Adams family. But the backbone of the book is supplied by the voluminous "Memoirs," which yield the most dramatic scenes and most memorable conversations.

"Here you have a diplomatic biography," writes Mr. Bemis in his preface; but actually the diplomacy is everything, the personal biography very slight. The book is primarily a series of finely executed monographs on the great diplomatic issues of Adams's career. It thus covers in detail the Treaty of 1818 with England, the treaty of the next year, in which Spain ceded Florida and fixed a definite boundary to the Pacific ("a great epoch in our history," wrote Adams in his diary); the Monroe Doctrine, for which Monroe is rightly given the larger credit; the unsuccessful Project of 1823 for broadening the freedom of the seas in peace and war; the Northeast boundary; the Oregon question, and other transactions of lesser note. For the most part, though not invariably, the author resists the temptation to ascribe excessive credit to his hero. He frankly admits mistakes and inconsistencies; perhaps a deeper exploration of the psychology and character of the man would have led him to admit more. But he has no difficulty in showing that in conscientiousness, in ability, in foresight, and in courage John Quincy Adams was always a magnificent representative and champion of the Republic. The American people still benefit from ideas that he was the first to propound and doctrines that he was foremost in defending.

As a series of monographs packed with detail and documentation this book has some chapters that become rather wearisome. If it does not quite make Adams a human being, still less does it turn other men—Clay, Rush, Monroe, Canning—into flesh-and-blood personalities. We may occasionally question Mr. Bemis's sense of proportion; any one subject seems to him about as important as any other. But taken as a whole this is a masterly depiction of a great diplomatic career, full of interest and instruction. It is praise enough to say that it is worthy of its subject.

Allan Nevins, professor of American history at Columbia, edited "The Diary of John Quincy Adams."

Public Characters

TWENTY-SEVEN MASTERS OF POLITICS. By Raymond Moley. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co. 276 pp. $3.50.

By Robert S. Allen

THE title of Mr. Moley's latest book flatters some of those he writes about. Not all of the twenty-six men and one woman succeeded in what Moley calls "this ancient profession."

Yet there was a reason for putting all of them in the book. Each approached politics with different talents and different purposes. Some succeeded in what they tried to do. Others made a mess of things. The lessons Moley draws from their careers may guide other aspiring candidates or king-makers to success. Meanwhile, this analysis of public characters in their purely political aspects provides a new vehicle which enables Moley to have the latest word in the many disputes raging among historians of the Roosevelt era as to who said what and when and why.

Tom L. Johnson, redoubtable Mayor of Cleveland in the early years of the century, was the master from whom Moley learned his first political lessons. Measuring latter-day politicians against him, Moley finds them all falling short of Johnson's ideal of "reform without incompetence." All fell short, too, in his role as a "public educator," who believed that a political leader's progress is limited by the capacity of the public to understand, accept, and to live with reform.

Al Smith came closest to Johnson in this regard, Moley believes. "Al Smith was the most potent political educator of a decade singularly devoid of lasting inspiration, and his ultimate rank as a statesman will rest upon that simple fact."

Herbert Hoover's inclusion in the book seems to rest on Moley's belief that Franklin Roosevelt feared Hoover as a rival. Says Moley, "Roosevelt actually believed that Hoover might well emerge once more as the leader and candidate of his party." Newsmen who covered the 1936 and 1940 Republican conventions will concur in this to the extent that Hoover very much wanted another fling at Roosevelt. At both conventions Hoover made undercover attempts to obtain the nomination. But it remained for Dewey to break the tradition that the Republicans never renominate a de-

—*Acme.*

Al Smith—"potent political educator."

—*Halsman.*

Wendell Willkie—"the immortal amateur."

Franklin Roosevelt—"the complete master of politics."

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feated candidate for the Presidency.

Moley regards Roosevelt as the complete master of politics.

> He was unusually attractive in physique and manner [writes Moley]. He liked people and most people liked him. His mind tended to discursiveness, except when politics was concerned. He was what high-browism lists as an activist. He did not quarrel with life as he found it... His mentality was perfectly suited to the life he was to lead... His academic record at Harvard and Columbia Law School was mediocre... Roosevelt simply was not reflective or philosophical. One can hardly recommend this sort of preparation for statesmanship, but it had immense reward for Roosevelt. It freed his mind for intense, almost passionate concern with matters which most serious people regard as the escapist pastime of idle hours. And these, when pursued with intense concentration, are invaluable in politics.

Willkie is rated as the "immortal amateur." Says Moley,

> Willkie died the amateur in politics, rejected by the party that had married him in a midsummer night's burst of emotion and adventure. But he died also in the cherished memory of a group that will always defy assimilation and that will never achieve political maturity.

Moley sums up another major Roosevelt opponent in these words:

> The significance of Thomas Dewey must be in the amazing fact that he went so far with so little natural political endowment. If ever a man circumvented the designs of Providence, it is Dewey. The quality and bent of mind, temperament, the demeanor and off-hour diversions of Dewey, carefully analyzed, would suggest great success in law, medicine, business, or in the Episcopal clergy. For politics, they simply do not apply.

One of the most interesting studies in the book is that of Supreme Court Justiee Felix Frankfurter. Moley holds that

> ...a close examination of Frankfurter's views on public questions reveals a rather narrow range of constructive ideas. In fact, they show little or no originality or deep comprehension of economic or social movements... Frankfurter has always been a conservative and one of his most effective political possessions was having the reputation among radicals as a sympathizer, while he could in truth align himself with conservatives.

Moley quotes Roosevelt as saying, during the holding-company fight in 1935, "Felix sounds just like John W. Davis."

World's Largest Trade Union

THE U. A. W. AND WALTER REUTHER. By Irving Howe and B. J. Widick. New York: Random House. 309 pp. $3.

By Wellington Roe

THIS is a book written on two levels. First, it is the story of the formation, rise, external policies, and internal politics of the world's largest trade union, the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, CIO. Secondly, it is an attempt to relate the union's development to the social and economic aspects of American life. Its authors are a free-lance labor journalist and a chief shop steward of the UAW in the Chrysler plant in Detroit.

On the first level the work is excellent. Here is a vivid picture of the unwholesome social atmosphere in which the American automobile industry grew—the high-rent slum habitations of workers, the economic pressure of never enough money and no job security superimposed upon working conditions in which labor spies, brutal company police, and intimidation were the auto barons' favorite methods to keep their employees docile.

Henry Ford used his famous $5-per-day wage in 1914 actually to cut labor costs. This was done by discharging skilled craftsmen who earned a higher rate of pay, then rehiring them at the $5 rate as semi-skilled workers although their duties upon re-employment were identical with those they had previously performed. Under this system it was common for Ford to discharge as many as 500 employees a day while hiring 500 to replace those dismissed.

Nor were the personnel operations of General Motors, Chrysler, and Hudson, as examples, much different. Racial differences have been ruthlessly exploited by the automobile manufacturers as a way to keep their workers separated and suspicious of one another.

Against such a background the UAW was formed. Despite brutal repression of unionized workers by their employers, it grew powerful. Reading these portions of the book one soon understands that the UAW or some similar union was inevitable in the automobile workers' battle against the dehumanizing process which the plant managements had contrived. This story is "must" reading for anyone who hopes to understand the meaning of the UAW.

In their attempt to relate the organization to the larger aspects of American life, however, many of the authors' conclusions seem to emanate from concepts of the union which cannot be sustained by the internal evidence even of their own work.

While they do not use the term, the authors contend in effect that a Third Force in America will arise through the growth of industrial unionism.

One may dissent from this opinion regarding the role of vertical unions in national affairs without rejecting evidence that the rise of industrial unionism through the CIO has been a major event in recent social history and that it is a "significant social force affecting the lives of millions of American workers." But when this has been acknowledged there still remains the need for examination of the social logic of this new force. Is its direction toward a desirable equalization of the pressures caused by the modern industrial system or will it become merely another movement devoted to the advancement of special group interests through political action?

As the UAW is easily the most important body among the industrial unions and has been for years the bellwether of social action in the CIO, its trend on matters of social import is a vital indication of the direction

Out of Print

By Sjanna Solum

LITERATURE of leaves is on the wind
That blows the story of summer from the world
In crisp, flamboyant phrases which are whirled
To doom beneath these woods so quickly thinned.
Those who go walking ankle-deep in leaves
Fallen and faded, drying into dust,
Need hearts well-fortified, because they must
Ignore the creaking of the bough that grieves.

Summer has withered to a tale well told,
Dear to the memory, but growing dim
To ease the taut remembrance now of him
Who holds its fabulous charm against the cold.
Through dessicated glory the late-comer
Will search these dusty files in vain for summer . . .

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of the entire industrial union apparatus.

The UAW has undeniably brought some sanity to the automobile industry, where human qualities have been consistently ignored by employers. It has given auto workers a sense of dignity which the assembly-line process tends endlessly to destroy. It has made employees of the automobile corporations among the higher paid laborers in the country. On cultural levels, however, it has barely scratched the surface. Among UAW members, the authors acknowledge, "—and for that matter among its leaders—there is hardly a seed of cultural curiosity." For a single example, jim crow, which is rampant in the auto plants, is frequently abetted and occasionally practised by officers of the union.

Admittedly, the UAW's top leadership has struck some heavy verbal blows against anti-Negro activities; nevertheless it has neglected to implement anti-discrimination talk with disciplinary action against union officers who foment race antagonism. To the answer that to do so would disrupt the peace of the organization one can reply that there was no hesitancy about destroying peacefulness in the union by the now dominant Reuther faction when they were fighting to take control of the body from the left-wing leadership.

It is this split personality of the UAW which causes many observers of organized labor to doubt that the claims of superior social consciousness made for its leaders will stand the weather.

Even the authors of this book, who profess admiration for Walter Reuther, are constrained to remark in a late chapter that his present tendency in thought and action is away from the robust democracy which made the early UAW an amazing and inspiring organization. "Is there not," they inquire, "something undeveloped and contrived in Reuther's personality?"

But regardless of the thin spots in the UAW fabric there is validity in the book's statement that "no other union has helped so many Americans to improve and elevate the quality of their lives." The UAW *is* a great union with immense potentiality for good in the nation. But, wonder the authors, "Will the UAW settle into the usual union rut and become just 'another union' or will it use its vast resource of energy and power to become a new social force in American life?"

That question is of the sixty-four-dollar variety not only in reference to the UAW, but regarding the entire American trade-union structure. Nowhere in their book do the authors attempt to answer the query.

Poetry. *The poetry of today can by no means divorce itself from the state of the world, and the principal books reviewed below reflect this condition. However, in the case of Harry Brown our reviewer finds his statements not sufficiently definitive. The recent controversy concerning the Bollingen Award has made the publication of "Selected Poems" by Ezra Pound of especial interest. The writing of Florence Converse has long been dedicated to the cause of international peace. Again we have in the work of Louis Simpson evidence of the continuing influence of Parisian culture among contemporary American poets. The reviewers of these books approach the poetry through its relationship to the issues today. Also assessed is new poetry by Alma Ellis Hoernecke, Francis Maguire, and Florence Burrill Jacobs.*

History, Tragedy, and Sentimentality

THE BEAST IN HIS HUNGER. By Harry Brown. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 84 pp. $2.50.

By Robert Gorham Davis

HARRY BROWN'S poetry is rich in sensibility and variety of poetic phrase, but it is undetermined in style and idea. The four elegies, the eclogue, and the ode which compose the first section of "The Beast in His Hunger" are elevated in tone and have a certain consistency of theme, but there is nothing to require one image rather than another, one phrase rather than another, and so, inevitably, the ghosts of more positive poets assert themselves in the stream of association. Brown sounds like Hopkins when he is addressing a bird, like Hart Crane when he is addressing the sea, and like Rossetti when he is addressing fair ladies. He summons up dead heroes and voyagers sometimes in the idiom of Yeats, sometimes of St. John Perse, and sometimes of Sacheverell Sitwell. Yet his associations are not genuinely free in the surrealist mode so that unexpected conjunctions occur to stir the imagination. The author of "A Walk in the Sun" and "Artie Greengroin" remains within a kind of *lingua franca* of poetry that is Shakespearean at its best; he makes almost no use of vernacular and of the imagery of contemporary life.

Harry Brown—"like Rossetti when he is addressing fair ladies."

In Brown's long war poem, "The Conquerors," his four soldiers all speak in the same grave and level voice. The first soldier says, "Let me have about me men that are gross." The second says, "We believe in signs./We have faith in the flight of birds, in necromancers,/In potions brewed by old women, in certain herbs,/In the phases of the moon and the entrails of oxen." The third refers to "this anabasis" and "this most puissant charge." Only the sergeant snaps us out of it. There are many swans in the war poems and the head of Apollo, and elsewhere many castles and willows, "curving lovesick to the pale bank." Some of the poems of the middle section, like "Nietzsche in Hell," "The Disembarkation of the Hero," and "Murderer, Murderee," are stronger in character and more composed. But even here one feels that the hero is any hero, the murderer any murderer, and not in the sense of Aristotle's "Poetics," which makes poetic generality superior to the concreteness of historic fact. Brown's genuine feeling for history and tragedy is made sentimental by its diffusion in plurality and generality, by its failure to comprehend poetically and dramatically particular men, particular deeds, particular truths.

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A Sampling of Pound & Modern Man

SELECTED POEMS. By Ezra Pound. New York: New Directions. 184 *pp.* $1.50.

THE ARRIVISTES: Poems 1940-1949. *By Louis Simpson. New York: The Fine Editions Press.* 93 *pp.* $2.

By Gerard Previn Meyer

THERE are more prizes for poets than prize awards: there is the great prize of publication. And New Directions, avant-garde publishing house, counters, or disregards, the Bollingen blow-up with what looks like the program for a veritable Pound jubilee. "Selected Poems" follows hard upon the issuance, or reissuance, of five other Pound items, while "Selected Translations" and "Selected Essays" are promised soon.

If Mr. Laughlin and his associates are working to prove (as I suppose they are) that poetry goes on, even though the poet has died or gone into paranoia, the project is worth while. In effect, it is a "memorial"—"the body dies; the body's beauty lives," as Wallace Stevens says in "Peter Quince at the Clavier," and whatever judgment we must form of the Pound who exiled himself first from his native land, then from humanity in general, and finally from himself—still, there are the poems.

Here, if anywhere, is the ideal proving-ground for the new critics' theory that the poem maintains a virtually independent existence from that of the poet. The "student" for whom this volume has avowedly been prepared would do well to ignore the "Autobiography of E. P.," which serves for preface, and to concentrate on the poems, which (except for passages in the later Cantos) have little or no connection with the aforesaid E. P. ("If a man have not order within him/He can not spread order about him," quoth Canto XIII.)

"Selected Poems" provides a good sampling of the Pound who wrote "A Virginal," the latter-day Renaissance poet, as well as the reincarnate Li Po and the other "personae" that Ezra wore during the years he spent absorbing the styles (and not the political thinking) of other centuries. But—for the good name of poetry—I suggest that in subsequent issues of this volume the New Directions editors get down off their high Pegasuses and exclude the lament for "Ben [ito] and la Clara" and the more scatological sections of Cantos XIV and XV. (Or what's an editor for?)

* * *

THE pleasure to be derived from a reading of the poems in "The Arrivistes," three of which are couched in dramatic form but all of which are dramatic in essence, is as various as the "subject matter" which encompasses, as Theodore Hoffman's preface notes, "the condition of modern man." Though young enough (twenty-six) to have gone through the war years as a combatant, Mr. Simpson is sufficiently aged-in-the-world's-wood to write about his experiences with controlled irony, with respect and horror, but without either illusions or disillusions. He is gay enough to turn out *erotica*, sober enough to be humorous about it.

Possessing a "varied enough national ancestry" (he was born in Jamaica), he can evolve such valuable and disciplined lines as

This got the start of my bestial,
indolent race
With coarse skin, crazy laugh, nostrils
like swords through the face.

He also, and especially, can convey the effect of big-city life upon our erstwhile human race, sieving it through Marvell-ous style until it emerges in such wise:

Since sin requires some expense
Our income is our innocence

and

So shall we manage till the day
Death takes the furniture away.

Mr. Simpson has studied at the Sorbonne; evidences of Villon and Rimbaud (two good guides to harsh reality) and vignettes of Paris, "the capital of the heart," testify to his absorption in and of Parisian culture. He proves in this first book that he has the kind of imagination that can cope successfully with both Paris and New York, love and war, seventeenth-century wit and twentieth-century perplexity; in sum, "a usable talent capable of taking over the world's old clothes and making something new of them.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

ENGLISH NOVELIST (1867-1933)

After identifying the fourteen well-known literary characters briefly described below, print their names in the spaces just above the description. The initial letters of the characters' names will spell the name of a famous English novelist. Allowing thirty points for the name of the novelist and five points for each character identified, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 27.

1. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
Cabin boy on the schooner that sailed to Treasure Island.
2. __ __ __ __ __ __ __
Fulfilling a prophecy, he killed his father and married his mother.
3. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
This famous sleuth is proud of his little gray cells.
4. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
This expert marksman was known as the Deerslayer.
5. __ __ __ __ __ __
She rode through Coventry in her birthday suit.
6. __ __ __ __ __ __
He was one of the three musketeers.
7. __ __ __ __ __ __ __
He and his sons were strangled by serpents.
8. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
This modern buccaneer is known as the Saint.
9. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
She kept house for Peter Pan in Never-Never-Land.
10. __ __
Home of the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion.
11. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
He was the third husband of Scarlett O'Hara.
12. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
He and his twin brother quarreled about a rattle.
13. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
He was a night-school student in beginning English.
14. __ __ __ __ __ __ __
She was the Princess of Graustark.

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Man's Spirit Supreme

PROLOGUE TO PEACE: The Poems of Two Wars. By Florence Converse. Wellesley, Mass: The Hathaway House Bookshop. 52 pp. $2.

By NORMA LAY

WAR in its mystical aspect, as a crime against God and the soul of man, emerges clearly from the pages of Florence Converse's group of poems. Probably no recent "religious" book affords a more practical exposition of the paradoxes of Christianity, or asserts more powerfully the fundamental supremacy of man's spirit even though tortured.

There is no revilement. Rather, a forceful yet compassionate statement of mankind's hypocrisies and inadequacies. Nor does the author stand apart from anything. That we are all involved in everything, she accepts. The men who fight and die in a spirit of idealism inherit blessedness as do the conscientious objectors who die excoriated. The intent of an action becomes its criterion. To be calumniated by society can be blessed, as she reiterates in "Bread Line."

One is tempted to evaluate these poems solely as protagonist for man's love of God and his fellow man, unless one remembers in time that any poem becomes propagandist solely in proportion to its being a good poem. "Descend, O Dante," with lines such as:

> . . . . Look down, great exile, and rehearse
> With us the steepness of the alien stair;
> Taste yet again, with us, the salty curse
> Of beggar's bread. . . .

invades one's sensibilities almost overwhelmingly. Less formal in treatment but no less austere in meaning is "Peace Table," somehow startlingly reminiscent of a Jooss ballet called, I think, "The Green Table." Miss Converse's skilled use of epigram occurs in many couplets, as in this from "Again the Knell of Beauty Sounds":

> But how shall the heart endure if beauty fade?
> If the God disappear?

One technicality jarred slightly on this reviewer: use in several poems of the verb "bespell" to mean "enchant."

At first reading of the book I thought the final couplet of "Peace Table,"

> So He sat there with the broken bread
> And the rejected cup,—waiting,—waiting—

—From "Neighbors."

closed the book, since all the poet's mystical fire calls us to drink of that Cup. But no. "They Have Blown the Trumpet," a final poem concerned with the atomic age, closes on a major chord:

> For once again, Love, the Very God,
> Has delivered Himself into our treacherous hands.

Poetry Notes

A WINTRY MIND, by Alma Ellis Hoernecke. Wings Press, Mill Valley, Calif. $2. Mrs. Hoernecke writes with a lively enterprise and technical skill about the facets of nature and the problems of man. A few of the poems reach a level of lyric delight, such as

> The daisy is too frail a wheel
> To break the heart upon;
> But none may watch its petaled face
> And not see there a hinted trace
> Of that great wheel, the Sun.

The good lyrics are lost among the competent poetic reporting which describes the oft-told and sentimental incidents in nature. The poet's sense of humor and alert observation are noted in her barnyard song of the garrulous guinea hen beneath whose gay plumage one can see "half-hidden away, the feather jewelry."

JOURNEY WITH MUSIC, by Francis Maguire. Monastine Press, Richmond Hill, N. Y. $2.50. Francis Maguire exhibits little concern with the modernists but there is often a modern note in his lyrics, which are musical, tight spun, and original. In his poem of snow falling at night, he lets the syllables fall almost as quietly as the snow covering the ugliness of the alley he describes. Part of the effectiveness of the poem is in the title, "White Lie." Maguire brings to many shop-worn subjects the sly and puckish glance of a poet finding something new to say. Listen as he speaks in sympathy to the fox:

> Around the cage, around the cage
> And still around, around you run.
> O furry fury eyed with flame
> Am I the unforgiven one?

And in the "Third World" we have a compressed statement of the evolution of music out of chaos, with the interesting idea:

> The third world is music;
> It's chemistry: sound.

Most of Maguire's lines are spare and resonant. Occasionally the lush rhetorical phrase creeps in and weakens the quality of a poem. In "Night Piece" we meet with "curious elegance" and "pristine elegance" in a snow poem quite inferior to the "White Lie."

NEIGHBORS, by Florence Burrill Jacobs. Harper. $2.50. Mrs. Jacobs's sonnets are held together by a New England locale, and a narrative method in which she presents her neighbors etched sharply within fourteen iambic pentameter lines. Several dramatic cameo characterizations are achieved in this tight corset of words and rhymes. Too many, however, cry out maimed and thwarted by the procrustean form which cuts down a story requiring twenty or more lines to the arbitrary fourteen. Only once does Mrs. Jacobs go beyond the single sonnet to tell a story. In "Defense in Depth" she uses four sonnets to recount the misery in the heart of a woman who quarreled with the Stephen she loved and lost, and is solaced by devoted Dan'l, whom she could not love. Here is the outline of a novel presented in a thin wedge of words. We share the poet's emotion as the dust of pressed flowers falls from the Bible:

> . . . Their yellow dust filled Dan'l palms
> Last time he looked up passages from Psalms.

Most of the poems are casual and conversational. The poet admires her neighbors even if she prods them for their petty faults. In "Cronies" Alma and Azuba are women who measure their virtue by the hour the beds are made, dishes washed, and washing hung on the line. After a visit marked by verbal fencing:

> Watchers know
> The vanquished by the testy way she stalks
> Homeward in a dudgeon, bonnet canted high;
> The winner nips a little as she walks.

Mrs. Jacobs's neighbors are interesting people and she records their eccentricities more often than their faults. Technically, her sonnets are a hybrid of the Petrarchian and Shakespearean forms. The excellent line illustrations by Aldren Watson add an authentic flavor to the New England townspeople in "Neighbors."

—A. M. SULLIVAN.

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Fiction. *The Communist belief that Russia won the war single-handed is elaborately illustrated in Ilya Ehrenburg's panoramic war novel, reviewed this week. "The Storm," winner of the Stalin Prize, is a synthetic synopsis of all the current Party-line interpretations of the gigantic struggle. Ehrenburg's long book is as insensitive to historical fact as it is to human nature, but it is recommended reading as a study of Russian mentality and the effects of Communist propaganda on literature. Two recent American novels deserve the reader's attention. Jane Eklund's is an unusual story of family life disrupted not by the familiar matriarchal grandmother but by an overbearing and tyrannical father. Bruce Marshall's "To Every Man a Penny" may be considered as an ironical allegory of the years between the two world wars. Its scene is Paris and its major character a simple-hearted French abbé, who confirms the thesis that love and virtue are not enough.*

A Different European Species

THE STORM. By Ilya Ehrenburg. New York: Gaer Assoc. 508 *pp.* $3.50.

By Harrison Smith

WHATEVER success it may have had in Russia, Ilya Ehrenburg's massive war novel will not sweep off his feet any American or Englishman who is not a Communist or a fellow-traveler. It is nevertheless deeply interesting for its insight into the official Russian view of the war and into the minds of individual Russians who had known France and Western Europe before 1939. As a young man Ehrenburg, the most violent and belligerently useful of all Russian war journalists, had lived for eighteen years in Paris, where he developed his literary and journalistic gifts as an admiring student of French literature. "The Storm" does not betray any likeness to the lucidity and verity of French writing. But considering its major thesis, that the war was won exclusively by his own country and that Russian Communists formed the solid basis of partisan revolts toward the end, it is a remarkable feat of legerdemain.

Since this long novel covers seven or eight years and has for its background France, Germany, and Russia, the author's task was principally one of selection and arrangement. His attempt to tell a coherent story by the use of scores of characters in scenes alternating from one country to another is almost inevitably bewildering to the reader. Told in this manner the novel could not possibly have the sweep and continued passion of war novels unified in time and space. The reader who finds himself landed sud-

Ilya Ehrenburg: "The Americans held drunken orgies."

denly in the midst of a family in Moscow, after leaving a group in Paris, may have to search doubtfully for the source of a name that has been briefly familiar to him a hundred pages back.

From the beginning the writer reveals the Russians, whether abroad or at home, as a different species from other Europeans; they are not passionless, but impervious to impressions and ideas that are contrary to their beliefs. When one of them who has been for years exiled in Paris goes to Russia on business and visits the brother he has loved, he is met with coldness, so that he asks him, "If a brother is a stranger, who is your kin? Is it that you don't recognize families?" The brother replies, "Yes, we do. But we recognize something else besides—our motherland. Here you are a stranger."

Back in Paris, which has been shocked by the news of the Russian betrayal in the sudden alliance with Germany, another Russian has some difficulty in convincing logical Frenchmen that it is simply a brilliant device for the eventual rescue of France from German domination, a patriotic and a noble conception. As the novel continues into the war, the reader begins to wonder what the British and the Americans have been doing all this time. In a scene in Belgium there is no mention of British troops, no account of the Battle of Britain, no account of Dunkerque, or later of the bombing of Germany. The British-American invasion of the Continent, the freeing of France, and the conquest of Germany appear as negligible historical events.

There are a few glimpses of American troops, always presented as coarse barbarians. "The Americans," he writes, "occupied the best hotels, held drunken orgies, and young women were afraid to go out at night." Again, "the Americans are boozing and brawling; they'd do better to establish order. . . . They don't give a hang. They dash about in their jeeps and run people over."

Considering all the difficulties in distorting history and writing a novel of vast dimensions that is presumably a record of the greatest war in the history of mankind, Mr. Ehrenburg has nevertheless created a book that should be read for whatever native inspiration it contains, for its contribution to the study of the Russian temperament and credulity, and for a few notable and memorable French and Russian characters. But it is doubtful if the publishers' statement that it is the best novel of Ehrenburg's career or that it is the most penetrating portrayal of the war that has yet appeared will finally prove to be an accurate appraisal of "The Storm."

Celebrant

By Ethel Jacobson

OUR shining feast
Was bravely spread,
But some one spilled the wine
And some one spoiled the bread,
And the fruit turned black
As I put out my hand
And a wind and a darkness
Filled the land.

And now with hunger
I sit accurst
At a laden board—
With hunger and thirst
For withered fruit
And a bitter brew
These mortal lips
Never knew.

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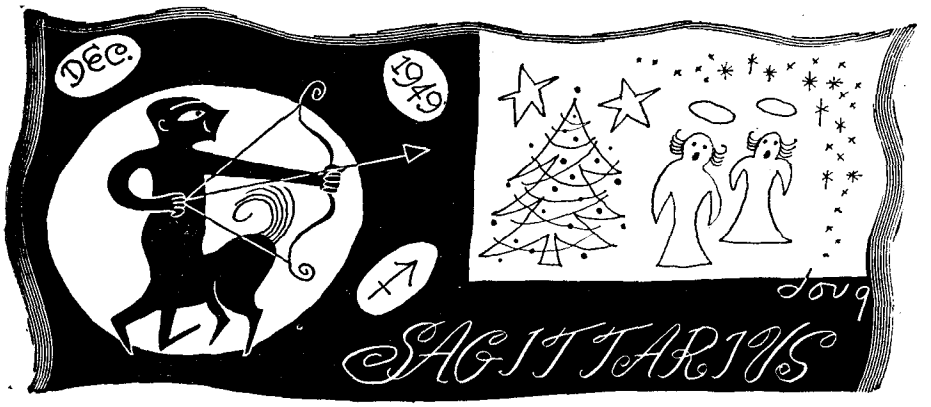

The World, France & Abbé Gaston

TO EVERY MAN A PENNY. By Bruce Marshall. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 345 pp. $3.

By THOMAS SUGRUE

IN THE summer of 1914 the Abbé Gaston was thirty-five years old, and for a man who lived on 3,000 francs a year and hoped for heaven he was reasonably happy. He was unofficially attached to the Church of Saint Clovis in Paris and lived in the garret of a nearby rooming house. He was not allowed to use the lift because he did not pay enough rent, and his room was unheated; but now and then another roomer, a kept woman whose quarters were centrally heated, invited him to share the elevator and made kind remarks about the work he did in a wicked and undeserving world. He was an utterly good man in so far as he was able to perceive the meaning of goodness; he believed in the Church and the sacraments, accepted authority, and forgave sin without demanding that forthwith and thereafter it cease existence. He had a sentimental conception of Jesus, and prayed earnestly that the Master lean down, brush the world, and do for men what their own moral strength could not accomplish. In August he went off to fight for France as a soldier and in 1918 he returned to Paris with a lame leg.

In the years that followed he continued his work, living through the curious dream of postwar Europe as did everyone else, expecting to wake from it each morning. He observed that his fellow priests at Saint Clovis, his superior, Chanoine Litry, his bishops and his Cardinal, were inclined to legalism, egotism, and Church politics, but it did not enter his mind that these facts were in any way connected with his comrade of the war, Bessler, who was also lame from battle, was poor, and had given up Christianity in favor of Communism. He listened while the Chanoine Litry complained of women's styles and muttered at the girls from Madame Bisberot's dressmaking establishment across the street, but later when his young friend Armelle became a prostitute, he remonstrated with the priest in whose care she had been, but saw nothing in the incident which reached beyond the individual clergyman in question. It did not even occur to him to search the Gospels more carefully, to discover whether the Master's way of life was entirely being imitated by those who took the vow to serve Him.

Thus lightly, obliquely, without comment or even tongue in cheek, Bruce Marshall in his latest novel traces the story of France, the world, and the Church as it reflected itself in the life of an obscure man who had promised to serve God, who kept his vow according to his understanding and his opportunities, who did a great many kind and Christian acts, who was treated shabbily by his superiors and his countrymen, and who in the end, blind and lame and unwanted, considered that he had passed a happy life and again prayed that the Master bend down, brush the earth, and give men the vision, wisdom, and sanctity they were unable to win for themselves. It is a touching, whimsical portrait, a little over-rich in its prefabricated prose style, a little naive in its plot maneuvers, but convincing and miserably correct in the impression it conveys of life among all of us from Sarajevo to the Berlin Blockade. There are some who will think the side excursions injure the story's unity and impact, but history itself is the book's only unity, and the trips into the thoughts of the Cardinal, the statesman, and other stock characters help rather than hinder the effect Mr. Marshall is attempting to produce.

Soul of a Family

THE ONLY GIFT. By Jane Eklund. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. 278 pp. $2.75.

By NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

LIKE the eternal Mom, Father, too, has been holding to a fabulous place in our national consciousness. Certainly since Clarence Day, Father has been fixed in our mind's-eye like some huge effigy larger than life—a hearty, robust, noisy man, loving and lovable, blustering and sentimental, at once ruler and slave of his family—before which we have paused, if not for worship, for an affectionate salute. A basically comforting figure, carefully lighted, it flatters us all as fathers and children both. What a startling thing it is to approach this figure—otherwise the same—from another angle, and to see now the harsher aspects, the deeper shadows that a light less acquiescent can reveal. It is this which I believe to be the essential achievement of Miss Eklund's novel: her calm and uncompromising view of Father as a destructive element, dominant and not playfully so, proud and conscious of a will like a rock upon which his sons and daughters must come to grief as sinners come to judgment.

The Lemmings are a large family of contending wills, held together by two strangely harmonious forces—the stubborn and inflexible will of the father, who would have them all live and move according to his judgment, and the calm love of the mother, who loves each of them and her husband, too, with an unquestioning devotion. She will take no sides at any time but hovers ineffectually at the fringe of the struggle, trying to bind up the wounds he makes. Reggie, the elder son, brings home his new bride, Susan; he and his father proceed then to try to make her over in the mold of what Mr. Lemming knows would be a good wife for his son. But Susan will not alter to his definition and, after a brief effort to make Reg understand what the issue is, leaves him. Trudy falls in love with Anthony Karr, an unconventional and interesting man whom Mr. Lemming dismisses brusquely in a few sentences of his own unimpeachable logic:

> "Charm," said Mr. Lemming. "Charm." And he might have said *death*. "Personable young men," said Mr. Lemming, "have something to cover up. And it's lack of character. Always. . . ."

Trudy accepts and lets Anthony wander out of her life, as she herself

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wanders out of the family. David, who loves art and music too much to seem his father's son, is sent to a sensible school to be taught science and mathematics and self-discipline. He rebels there and gets into trouble. Constance marries the only man she knows who can carry her away to another city to live. And Martha, restless and inoculated against her sisters' mistakes, finds a job on an airliner. At the end none of them are at home any longer. Mr. Lemming is certain they will understand some day what he has tried to do for them. And Mrs. Lemming remains by his side, loving him and understanding him.

It is a novel of mood and personality. Much of what happens happens off-stage, and the narrative we read is made of words and reflections, thoughts just below the level of speech, and the silent clashing of wills. What we do get instead of action—and in many ways more rewarding than action—is a sense of the living reality of this family in its crucial struggle, indeed a fine developing portrait of the soul of the Lemmings as one flowing, living, interacting body. I think many readers will find many kinds of excellence in Miss Eklund's book. My emphasis upon her study of Mr. Lemming indicates only part of her accomplishment. Her writing is skilful and delicate and mature. She is as good with a milieu as she is with a character and she can get resounding echoes out of what seem to be understatements. If this is, as I believe, a first novel, it heralds an important career.

Fiction Notes

THE INVISIBLE GATE, by Constance Beresford-Howe. Dodd, Mead. $2.75. Into the tight and devoted little family of Hannah Jackson comes Noel Carter, major in the recent war and now loose upon the world in search of everything it owes him. Love for one thing—which he demands of Hannah; the money—which he will obtain by marrying her sister Laurel. Will Ames, who brought his friend Noel happily home with him, had always planned on marrying Hannah himself, but Will cannot cope with the wilful, calculating, amoral man Noel has become. Will can only retire bitterly within himself and watch Noel wreaking de-

(*Continued on page* 27)

Miasma of Suspicion

MORRIS L. ERNST

IN THE main, I should imagine every reader of *The Saturday Review* would agree with Henry Steele Commager's thesis in his guest editorial of Nov. 5, "What Ideas Are Safe?," in which he makes an eloquent plea for freedom of expression. But is it unfair to ask a leading historian to give us a clue as to what should now be done? I am reminded of the many people who, in connection with the dangers of atomic energy, keep shouting: "This is the end of our civilization; we are at the cross-roads of life; follow me." Small wonder they get little following. People cannot easily be exhorted to travel into limbo. I think the weakness of the Commager position as a measure for creating the kind of climate he and I would like to see lies in the omission of facets which he might accept as addenda to his thinking.

The "miasma of suspicion is spreading over the land, and all of us, willy-nilly breathe its foul fumes," says Professor Commager. I agree.

1. But would not Commager think that it is high time to trace the source of this miasma? Surely the Dies, Thomas, etc., investigatory committee procedures contributed. No doubt the lethargy towards the activities of such committees that is characteristic of all except a handful of groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, is responsible. Incidentally, as a matter of curiosity, I checked and found that Commager, for some inexplicable reason, has never joined the American Civil Liberties Union. The cause of free thought is not advanced by people who limit their activities to the doleful shaking of heads.

2. Isn't it possible that the newspapers and radio were a contributing cause to the miasma? *SRL*'s Oct. 29 editorial entitled "Even Good News Is News" suggests what I have in mind. The best papers in the country front-page the intellectual smear smog which the owners and editors very often do not even believe to be true and which they explain away, at times, in diluted editorials unread by the public.

3. Maybe our libel laws contributed to the miasma. There is a myth in this land that all testimony before Congressional committees is immune from libel suit. It just isn't true. Quite a few of the people who have suffered from violent, irrelevant, and gratuitous attacks made by witnesses before Congress have declined to exercise their right to sue for libel even when they have been offered legal services without expense to them.

4. Isn't it possible that certain well-known leaders in our community have contributed to the miasma by recklessly and carelessly lending their names to organizations as to which they knew nothing? I have been consulted by more than a dozen of the top glamourites of the acting, writing, and movie professions. They were not Communists. If they were offered $25,000 to endorse a toothpaste, they would get sixteen different people to check into the reliability of the toothpaste. These leaders in American mores may have contributed to the miasma by lending their names to organizations in which they did not have sufficient "concern," in the Quaker sense of the word, to be aware of what the organizations were doing. Millions of neurotic boys and girls collect their autographs to fill up their frustrated existence by vicarious living and follow these people as their leaders. Surely, it is important that people engage in organizational societal activities. I deplore that some of my friends who have been deceived on several occasions now decline to sponsor *any* movement. Maybe the careless lending of reputations by important people has added to the miasma.

5. Maybe the hysteria and miasma have been increased not entirely by those who limit or urge the limitation of freedom but also by those who like to cry "hysteria" and "witch hunt." Here's one bit of evidence on this sector: I have talked to hundreds of people to see what they knew *factually* about the President's Loy-

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alty Oath program. Not one in seventeen was aware that the State Department procedure, for example, shocking as it was in a few cases, had nothing to do with the President's Loyalty Proclamation. I then asked simple questions such as: How many people were investigated under the Loyalty Oath, how many were immediately cleared, how many actually severed their relations as a result of hearings and appeals, etc.? Practically no one had any knowledge. For some reason the very exciting monthly reports of what happened under the Loyalty Proclamation were seldom published. The *New York Herald Tribune* rendered outstanding and singular service in this connection by printing the facts from time to time. I am not entering a blanket defense of the present procedure. On the contrary, I have been one of those who have proposed elaborate and detailed plans for reforming the entire loyalty procedures so as to limit the program to people holding jobs in sensitive areas. That is an important but different question. The question I now ask is, isn't it possible that the hysteria was increased because the people who were shouting hysteria never looked or were given occasion by the press to look at the facts? Here are just a few lines which may surprise even *SRL*'s erudite readers: As of September 23 a total of 2,654,856 employees had been processed, 2,643,574 were cleared without further investigation by the FBI. All but 10,724 files were immediately closed, marked "no disloyal data." Of these millions investigated up to June only ninety-one were dismissed. Bear in mind that the FBI can't fire or hire. It only investigates and reports. The power of severance lies in the departments. Bear in mind also that the FBI must, as a constabulary, put everything it gets into its files—facts, rumor, garbage, whatnot, because the greatest danger freedom can face is a police force granted power to screen its files. Maybe miasma grows out of such ignorance. Possibly the entire investigation cost more than it was worth. But that's not the question that Commager raised.

The above are just a few suggestions for an effective approach to attain the objectives on which Commager and I agree. I could list dozens of others, with more particular references to the need of revision in loyalty procedures, or—what most people overlooked entirely—the action of Congress, which in effect abolished Civil Service in various major departments of the Government with respect to the discharge end of an employee's service.

Above all, I thought it unfortunate that Commager, as an historian, did not refer at all to what seems to me to be one of the contributing causes to this change in our cultural habits.

"Come, come, Podmore—I'm sure they'll be crazy about you!"

THE town meeting and the secrecies even of the Committees of Correspondence of Revolutionary times have given way to mass media of communications and mass underground movements. As travel and communication increased in ease, mass communication became a prerequisite for effective societal group activities. It is my impression that we can do very little to correct the climate of public opinion unless we come to grips with this basic problem. I take the position that there is not a word of testimony which I have seen in the recent Communist trial that I would not happily defend if it had been spoken openly in the market place of thought. I am in favor of personal anonymity as a matter of taste, but in societal group affairs I would suggest that some historians might help us in appraising the validity of secrecy and stealth in mass movements which are directed toward the public mind. For my part, I have never seen a case where speech is thrown into the public market place of thought where there was, in my opinion, any "clear or present danger." On the other hand, I am quite convinced that stealth and anonymity, in organized mass movements dealing with societal problems rather than with individual ones, carry a potential of danger through the very element of their secrecy. The First Amendment negates the need for stealth and anonymity, whether practised under nightshirts like the Klan or in cellars like the Communists. Isn't it possible that a good part of the miasma to which Commager refers cannot be cleared until we come to grips with this problem of stealth? For this reason I think rules of law to be applied to the fact part of the recent Communist case are of supreme importance with respect to the Commager point of view. Aren't we in possible danger of having this miasma extended in our jurisprudence if the courts fail to distinguish between the dangers implicit in stealth as compared to what should be our utter feeling of safety as to any and all ideas thrown into the open market place for controversy and debate? The greatest single contribution to our history may well be the gamble we took and wrote into the First Amendment to the Constitution. In simple terms, we said that we will stake our all on a wager that truth will win out in an *open* market place of thought. If ideas are pumped into the market place stealthily, with vast quantities of pamphlets, etc., anonymously distributed and richly financed, maybe we will have to modify our gamble and admit that the odds are probably only one out of three that truth can win out against the organized secret sending of ideas to the mind of man by material financed by people who either haven't the courage to stand up and say whom they are financing, or who have such a lack of faith in our national gamble that they know that they cannot succeed in winning favor in the market place unless they operate under nightshirts or the equivalent. I would love to have Commager address himself to this phase of the problem.

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The Time-Trap

IN A Boston suburb, a nine-year-old boy reluctantly showed his father a report card heavily decorated with red marks, then proposed one way of getting at the heart of the matter: they could give the teacher a box of poisoned chocolates for Christmas. "It's easy, Dad, they did it on television last week. A man wanted to kill his wife, so he gave her candy with poison in it and she didn't know who did it."

In Brooklyn, New York, a six-year-old son of a policeman asked his father for real bullets because his little sister "doesn't die for real when I shoot her like they do when Hopalong Cassidy kills 'em."

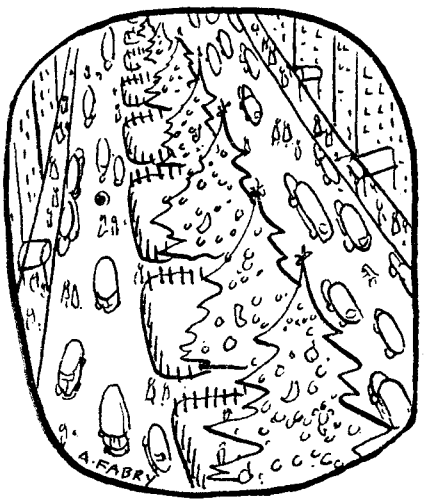
In Los Angeles, a housemaid caught a seven-year-old boy in the act of sprinkling ground glass into the family's lamb stew. There was no malice behind the act. It was purely experimental, having been inspired by curiosity to learn whether it would really work as well as it did on television.

The terror comic strips were bad enough, but they are rapidly on the way to playing squeaky second fiddles to television as prime movers in juvenile misconduct and delinquency. TV is hardly out of infancy as a major industry, but already it has become the nation's number one time-trap for children in those areas where video programs are available. And what makes terror on TV more effective than in comics is that it often enjoys the sanction of a family audience. When Johnnie and Mary sit down before the magic glass screen to take in an evening's entertainment, they often do so in the presence of Mother or Dad or both. This unspoken parental benediction hovers over the electronic eye as it tells the story of the inevitable love triangle which becomes a twosome via the equally inevitable device of the poisoned highball glass, or the story of a gang war in which corpses are strewn about like popcorn at a circus.

It would be easy but unfair, however, to load *all* the blame on the parents. Part, at least, must be reserved for television itself. Here, in concept at least, was the most magnificent of all forms of communication. Here was the supreme triumph of invention, the dream of the ages—something that could bring directly into the home a moving image fused with sound—reproducing action, language, and thought without loss of measurable time. Here was the magic eye that could bring the wonders of entertainment, information, and education into the living room. Here was a tool for the making of a more enlightened democracy than the world had ever seen.

Yet out of the wizardry of the television tube has come such an assault against the human mind, such a mobilized attack on the imagination, such an invasion against good taste as no other communications medium has known, not excepting the motion picture or radio itself. In the one year since television has been on an assembly-line basis, there has been mass-produced a series of plodding stereotypes and low-quality programs. Behind it all, apparently, is a grinding lack of imagination and originality which has resulted in the standardized television formula for an evening's entertainment: a poisoning, a variety show, a wrestling match.

To be sure, there are some chinks of light in the tunnel. But for every half hour worth seeing, there are literally days of wrath and writhing. For every first-rate entertainment program there are dozens of tank-town revues. For every Kukla, Fran, and Ollie program, which stimulates rather than stultifies the imagination of children, there are countless unskilled and ear-shattering kiddie shows and an even larger number of terror-and-torture specials. For every truly magnificent public-service feature such as the televising of the sessions of the United Nations or the NBC Symphony or the round-table forums or the Roy K. Marshalls or the Ivan Sandersons or the book-author programs, there are numberless time-fillers whose only function seems to be to keep the animated commercials from running together. For every top-notch sports event there are endless grunt-and-groan festivals that are supposed to pass for wrestling.



IT IS not as though television lacks men and women of stature on the planning end. But persons of the ability and reputation of Lyman Bryson or Leon Levine or Sterling Fisher or Margaret Cuthbert or Robert Saudek are without sufficient scope or outlet for their professional talents on TV. What has happened apparently is that the industry was honeycombed at the start with supposed crowd-pleasers who moved in on the ground-floor and promptly converted it into a sub-cellar. It was the same old story: the grotesque perpetuation of the fable about the intelligence of the average American—that it is somewhere on the level of the twelve-year-old child. This billion-dollar blunder has already come close to putting the skids under Hollywood, has devitalized and disfigured much of radio, and has wrecked some of the largest pulp magazines in America. Despite the evidence, TV is apparently using the same bubble for its foundation. What is needed is a prodigious raising of sights that takes into account the phenomenal rise in the national level of education, and, in general, the increasing maturity of the American people as measured by all available indices.

This is no argument for highbrowism or for the conversion of TV into an extension of the classroom. Television is essentially a medium of entertainment and enlightenment. But it is still light-years away in any truly vital and creative approach to the fabulous possibilities waiting to be recognized and realized.

In any event, all speculation over the future of television must begin with the hard truth that right now it is being murdered in the cradle.

—N. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Satirical Eye of God

SIR: Mr. Niccolo Tucci's review of my book "The Eye of God" [*SRL* Nov. 19] underlined a point that I had, I thought, made clear, namely the mood of *Gemütlichkeit* that hovered over Aspen in Tyrol all through the war. He complains of it as a kind of blasphemy.

Understandably, exiles and refugees are forever demanding of writers that every story of Europe in years past must carry the bloody threads of the concentration camp, the routine persecution horrors, and the total damnation of landscape and the figures therein.

In the past I have done that (in fact gone to the extent of having myself locked up by the Nazis in Munich at the very beginning of their regime). The concentration camp I have examined in microscopic detail (see the story of Pappelmeier Pepperl in "The Best of Times").

Rather than write more of the same, it seemed reasonable to attack the problem with the strongest weapon I know, which is satire; and my Tyrolean village offered a chance for that. Aspen was as *gemütlich* all through the war as was the Stork Club, the White House, and Maxim's in Paris. It's supposed to be satire, Mr. Tucci, not reporting. Furthermore, writers with an eye on Hollywood don't pen things like "Dirty Eddie."

LUDWIG BEMELMANS.

New York, N. Y.

Obsolete Orphans

SIR: Taking care of the orphans of Hiroshima is all very well, but what about the orphans of Tokyo? There are more of them. They are worse burnt. They had predecessors and are more likely than those of Hiroshima to have successors.

Another Hiroshima is unlikely. We know that if we toss an atomic bomb the Russians may throw back seven; therefore we will not fling the first one, any more than we fired the first phosgene shell in World War II.

But we are preparing to do strategic bombing in a big way, a bigger way than we applied to Tokyo. In short, vaporized orphans are obsolete, but roasted orphans will be served up as usual in the next war. We should practise taking care of that kind, rather than the kind we may never have to look after again.

GERALD W. JOHNSON.

Baltimore, Md.

"Plot for an Epoch"

SIR: Several weeks ago I outlined briefly to a friend the plot of a novel I had started. Today he phoned me to describe your editorial "Plot for an Epoch" [*SRL* Dec. 3]. The general plots are identical, the only difference being that my scientists hold their secret conclave right here in the Capital instead of Africa. Talk about coincidence! In fact, the chief scientist, in my first chapter, delineates his planned hoax with the self-

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"Bread and circuses! Bread and circuses! What I want is social security!"

same arguments you present in your piece.

You and I were certainly thinking along the same lines. If you happen to know of a publisher who might be interested in "persuading" me to continue, let me know.

EDWARD A. HARRIS.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: Your editorial "Plot for an Epoch" suggests as a theme for a novel a group of scientists faking a universal peril in order to unify mankind. It ends, "What would happen after that? We're looking forward to the novel to find out." I can end your suspense by telling you what did happen in two such novels. In "The Flying Saucer," by Bernard Newman, Papa Pontivy fakes the threat of an invasion from Mars, with the ultimate result that all the U-235 in the world is handed over to a benevolent scientist, who will use it for peaceful purposes. In "The Big Eye," by Max Ehrlich, a group of astronomers predict that a wandering planet, which actually will pass near the earth, is to collide with it. As a result, not merely do Jews and gentiles, whites and Negroes, Communists and Christians, lie down together, but it is found that there are enough goods for all "with proper distribution"—and also by dint of living for two years on mankind's capital. At the end, when the planet has passed by, even though there are no crops planted and there is once more a future to provide for, these good results continue, or so we are told.

BASIL DAVENPORT.

New York, N. Y.

Holy Curiosity

SIR: In *SRL* Nov. 26 the lines from Dr. Einstein's "Notes for an Autobiography" "It is, in fact, nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need of freedom; without this it goes to wrack and ruin without fail" moved me to the following:

EXHORTATION

A child cries "Why?" and Plato
smiles.
A child's eyes keen, and Plato's
gleam.
What alchemy's at work there?
What worlds to conquer, dare?

The world's a wonder. It can well be
A home for lifetimes of philosophy.
Take heed before you, careless, kill
A love for learning, inborn still.

DOROTHY LANDY.

Detroit, Mich.

"The Pearls of Publishing"

SIR: Three cheers and more for your splendid new feature "The Pearls of Publishing." Since his own publisher does not do so, may I nominate "Northern Farm," by Henry Beston, a Rinehart book, for a place in this category? Here is the work of a prose Robert Frost, a sensitive observer of the relationship between man and nature.

The mass of the reading public today, regrettably, prefers sensationalism and extreme exaggeration in their reading matter. A realistic novel apparently has to contain these ingredients in order to sell in quantity. The only other kinds of novels which sell as widely are those which go to another extreme in the form of sentimental religious appeal. Perhaps after Kinsey's second report comes out, telling all about women as well as men, the American public may know everything they want to know about sex and won't need to go on buying novels just to find out about their neighbors' bedroom lives. But

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until the revolt against Puritan repression and ignorance has come to this ultimate phase I can't see much chance for a change in the public taste for sensationalism. All the more reason for applauding *The Saturday Review*'s new department, which should help to move some more copies of these unsensational books across more counters in the bookstores of America.

FITZROY DAVIS.

Evanston, Ill.

Prejudice Among "Liberals"

SIR: The Taylor Caldwell controversy [*SRL* Nov. 12] has drawn out some classical examples of prejudice among so-called liberals.

Mr. James M. Tyler comes right out and says that "when people launch defense of the Catholic position" they "resort to platitude, generalization, and the old device of taking off on tangents." As a long-term worker for intercultural understanding and good will, I have collected four filing cabinets full of variations of that particular prejudicial platitude.

In his next sentence Mr. Tyler adapts a well-known picture of a scapegoat: "the Catholic hierarchy chuckles and bites off another chunk of [their] civil liberties." Most of your readers must have seen the time-worn original of that picture: the bloated "international Jew" swallowing the terrified, defenseless world, grinning lewdly the while in gluttonous anticipation. I agree with Mr. Tyler that Paul Blanshard's book is excellent reading for people who think as he does, just as "The Protocols of Zion" were practically biblical to "Christian" Fronters and "Christian" Crusaders a few years back. I could recommend other writers to him for the other side of the question, but those I might mention are handicapped by having knowledge of Catholicism.

Now, Mr. Elliott M. Grant is of a different order. He strikes a definite attitude with his platitude. He takes off only on the tangents already approved-without-proof in the trigonometry of terror which poses the problem: ". . . . the Roman Catholic Church's attempt to obtain tax money for its schools or its attempt to impose its own ethic on the whole community." Mr. Grant tempts a debater to point out to him that it is school*children*, not schools, who have benefit of free transportation, free medical examinations, and free lunches where they are needed; that Catholic tax-payers and parents support these privileges in the public schools; that parochial schoolchildren (a minority) might have need of them, too. He tempts those who love an argument to another protrusion of the neck: that any vote of a conscientious citizen is the "imposition of an ethic," whether it be a vote against birth control, against euthanasia, against firing squads, against capital punishment, against prejudice toward minorities, or against any other denial of the dignity of life.

My own pet platitude is: all people are alike in need, regardless of creed or greed.

ISABEL CURRIER.

Marblehead, Mass.

The Film Forum

GOD'S WORLD

The Saturday Review's Weekly Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Although churches are among the leading users of non-theatrical films in this country, the so-called "religious" films have consistently been of the poorest imaginable quality. Most of them are crude re-enactments of Bible stories, or modern-dress stories deriving from Biblical sayings and teachings. However sincere they must have been in the planning stage, the final results can only be classed as utter fiascoes. The casual viewer hesitates to condemn them for fear of implying criticism of their basic motives. And we cannot say that the Bible doesn't lend itself to dramatization on film—D. W. Griffith's silent classic, "Intolerance," has some extraordinarily moving episodes from the life of Jesus. But magnificent film work of this kind cannot be copied merely by using the same text.*

The occasional amateurishness of many kinds of films is easily overlooked, but films which are insensitive and offensive can never be excused. The films reviewed below are reasonably good exceptions to this sad rule about religious films and perhaps will serve to indicate a better direction for future production.

ONE GOD—
THE WAYS WE WORSHIP HIM

Produced by Farkas Films. Distributed by Association Films, 35 W. 45th St., New York 19. Daily rental $10, weekly rate $25. (37 min.)

Starting out with the important role which "freedom of worship" has played in the history of this country, the film focuses upon the distinguishing, and often similar, rituals and symbolisms of the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant faiths, and the minority groups within each of the larger ones. It introduces the audience into churches and temples and meeting rooms which they probably would never have a chance to know at first hand. The camera serves as an observer rather than an interpreter; spoken comments are simple and explanatory, without emotional overtones. An interesting musical background provides additional significance to the ceremonies pictured.

One justifiable complaint is that the film does not develop its "One God" theme to anything like the extent to which it explores "The Ways We Worship Him." Such a film would certainly be harder to make, probably less acceptable in some situations, but infinitely more interesting and worth while.

"One God," based on Florence Mary Fitch's book of the same name, was made especially for young people, but it should interest their elders just as much.

CREATION ACCORDING TO GENESIS

Produced by Herman Boxer and released by the Religious Film Assn., 45 Astor Place, New York 3. Rental $5. (10 min., color.)

Here is a Biblical film which didn't involve building costly sets or re-enacting age-old stories. Its subject matter is as exciting as any—the earth and the heavens, darkness and light, the land and the waters, the cycle of the seasons, the fruits and creatures of the sea and the air and the land, and man created in the image of God.

With deliberate slowness the camera illuminates the spoken words of the text, using the simple details of nature rather than attempting to create an illusion of breathtaking, panoramic, and essentially false splendor.

There is every reason why this film should be shown outside churches at least as much as in them. It stands its ground well as a film, combining sensitive camera techniques and an excellent musical score with one of the most familiar narratives ever told.

ANSWER FOR ANNE

Produced by Caravel Films for the National Lutheran Council and released by the Religious Film Assn., see above. Rental $10. (40 min.)

"Answer for Anne" was made with great concern for two kinds of people: those who have been cut off from creative normal lives as a result of the past war, the so-called "displaced persons," and those who prefer not to think about them in any realistic and constructive way, that is, you and me.

It could hardly be asked that a more convincing and appealing film be made. This is a "message" film with much to say and a slick, professional manner of saying it. There are only a few scenes which get bogged down in amateurish acting and they are certainly forgivable.

The story in brief: Anne, an attractive high-school student, is assigned a term paper on "Why Our Town Should Take in DP's." She goes out to interview the townspeople and the answers she gets add up to one thing in her mind—selfishness. Her pastor tells her about his recent visit to DP camps and Anne decides that the problems can be solved. "We can make room, we can find jobs, we can bear the burden of *people*—we always could."

—CECILE STARR.

For information about the purchase or rental of any films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York 19, N. Y.

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SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY—1949

(Continued from page 9)

readers. They are almost exactly reproduced in Eando Binder's "Lords of Creation"* and in two short stories published between covers during the last year—one by Isaac Asimov called "No Connection," which appears in the "Best Science Fiction Stories: 1949"† anthology and one by Nelson Bond in his "The Thirty-First of February" collection, called "Pilgrimage." In all four the remote future is not a Beulah land of pie in the sky but a new stone age, and in all four the decay has come about through war and epidemic.

OF course, the purposes of the four stories are far apart. Mr. Binder is writing a straight adventure story in which the nature of his material has forced him to include something more than adventure (notes on social systems, for instance) merely to make his story plausible. Mr. Asimov is interested in saying that any civilization which starts with human preconceptions will probably end up badly and contrasts human society with a sounder basic development of an ursine race. Mr. Bond is discussing matriarchy as the primitive form of state. Mr. Stewart, concerned with the problems of the civilized individual in a declining world, has been forced to a certain amount of adventure in order to provoke reactions from his character. There is no question but that Bond's is the best story and Stewart's probably the best science-fiction-fantasy book of 1949, but the main point lies in the resemblances between them and the others.

Incidentally, among all the science-fiction books of the year, light or serious, there is only one which exhibits the slightest faith in democracy as an operable system for the future —S. Fowler Wright's "The World Below"‡—and in this volume the democracy is of a very peculiar sort, laid in a future so remote that man has evolved into several different species, some of them extremely repulsive. The other authors do not find Mr. Orwell's horrible totalitarianism in the future, except among alien and unpleasant races, but they have been unable to conceive of a form of democratic government that will function for some two billion people on earth, to say nothing of the populations of remoter planets. This may only mean that the writers of fantasy are not political thinkers, or that the old aristocratic tradition of fiction still retains a firm grasp on the collective imagination. But it may also mean that there is some political thinking to be done. The writers in this form are very quick to seize any new idea going around; there are hardly enough in circulation to serve as starting points for stories as it is.

This is emphasized by the fact that at least three fantasy novels of 1949 begin with the theme of the amulet of supernatural powers and in two of them the amulet is the Stone of Solomon. One of these latter two is "Exiles of Time," already mentioned, a pulp-type adventure story. The other, Charles Williams's "Many Dimensions,"* is quite a different proposition—the third of the really distinguished novels of the year which, in method and settings, is a work of fantasy. The problem here is good and evil; the latter is made unattractive and the former exciting in a manner rivaled only by C. S. Lewis; a book brilliantly written with plot and character dovetailing as perfectly as the joints of a Boule cabinet. Here, even more clearly than in the other serious novels, fantasy is employed as a tool for intensifying emotion or, better, bringing to the action-producing level emotions that in most people yield no more than a rather vague sensation.

The remaining amulet story, "The Web of Easter Island,"† by Donald Wandrei, belongs to the "horror-from-beyond-the-world" school made into something like a cult by the late H. P. Lovecraft, and is in fact dedicated to Lovecraft. Mr. Wandrei might have spared himself the trouble; not only is it a far better story as story than anything Lovecraft ever produced but it goes straight as a string from beginning to destination, without any of the long passages of undigested description and piled adjectives in which Lovecraft so frequently indulged.

To emphasize the comparison between the older and more recent types of science-fiction writing, there are a few period pieces in the collection. Olaf Stapledon has long been known as one of the best writers in the field, but his "Worlds of Wonder"* consists of three long-short stories, whose delicate mysticism is hard to extract because the stories are so wordy and complicated as compared with the modern type of product. There are two volumes by Dr. David H. Keller,† one of the real founders of what may be called the science-fiction movement. They will be eagerly read by aficionados because they are period pieces and as such neglected by non-specialists, to whom the excellence of the scientific ideas involved will fail to compensate for the stilted dialogue and the lacunae in plotting.

In fact, if any one thing emerges from this year's group, it is that the boys who began by writing fantasy fiction are now writing fiction. The scientific or fantastic element is still present but the problems have become human problems caused by the advance of physical science, which is fundamentally the major problem besetting the world today. Much science-fiction-fantasy writing is light and sometimes the ideas involved will not bear a great deal of weight. But with the exception of the Stapledon volume there is not one book in the group which fails to have narrative drive, people moving around, and things happening to them. The specialist science-fiction writers learned that in the pulps; they have been forced to learn the other things because people who knew them already, like Orwell, Stewart, and Charles Williams, have entered the competition. Now they are reaching out beyond the specialist public to bring to an increasing number of general readers an appreciation of the most lively form of fiction today. Four of the best talents in the field, Cleve Cartmill, L. Sprague De Camp, Robert A. Heinlein, and Theodore Sturgeon, are this year represented only by short stories in an anthology —"My Best Science Fiction Story."‡ Longer works from these masters are promised during 1950.

Fletcher Pratt, a prolific writer on naval and military history, has also written science fiction.

*LORDS OF CREATION. By Eando Binder. Philadelphia: Prime Press. 272 pp. $3.

†BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES: 1949. Edited by E. F. Bleiler and T. E. Dikty. New York: Frederick Fell. 314 pp. $2.95.

‡THE WORLD BELOW. By S. Fowler Wright. Chicago: Shasta Publishers. 344 pp. $3.50.

*MANY DIMENSIONS. By Charles Williams. New York: Pellegrini & Cudahy. 308 pp. $3.

†THE WEB OF EASTER ISLAND. By Donald Wandrei. Sauk City, Wis.: Arkham House. 191 pp. $3.

*WORLDS OF WONDER. By Olaf Stapledon. Los Angeles: Fantasy Publishing Co. 282 pp. $3.

†THE HOMUNCULUS. By David H. Keller. Philadelphia: Prime Press. 160 pp. $2.50.

LIFE EVERLASTING. By David H. Keller. Newark, N. J.: Avalon Press. 381 pp. $3.50.

‡MY BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORY. Edited by Leo Margolies and Oscar J. Friend. New York: Merlin Press. 556 pp. $3.95.

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Seeing Things

THE AMERICAN BARRY

FRIENDSHIP should be a private pleasure, not a public boast. I loathe those braggarts who are forever trying to invest themselves with importance by calling important people by their first names in or out of print. Whether they know or only pretend to know the persons they would have us believe are their intimates, such first-naming for effect makes me cringe. I find it vulgar beyond comfort or forgiveness. Yet I have no other choice in the paragraphs which follow than to refer to Philip Barry as Phil. In my thoughts and feelings he was "Phil" to me ever since those distant days at Harvard when in 1921 I first came to know him in Professor Baker's Workshop.

We were close friends then and for the next few years, and though I seldom saw him thereafter (indeed, not on the old and treasured basis until last summer and this fall) I never ceased to consider him a friend. Our friendship was bound to have its dormant interludes if for no other reason than that professionally we were, as he saw it, Montagues and Capulets. Like many another creative writer, Phil had no fondness for critics. He was human enough to be pleased when he was praised. Even then, however, the audacity of those who could not write a play daring to pass a snap judgment on those who could, and who had labored long to do so, always struck him, quite understandably, as an impertinence. It was an impertinence which he found hard to endure.

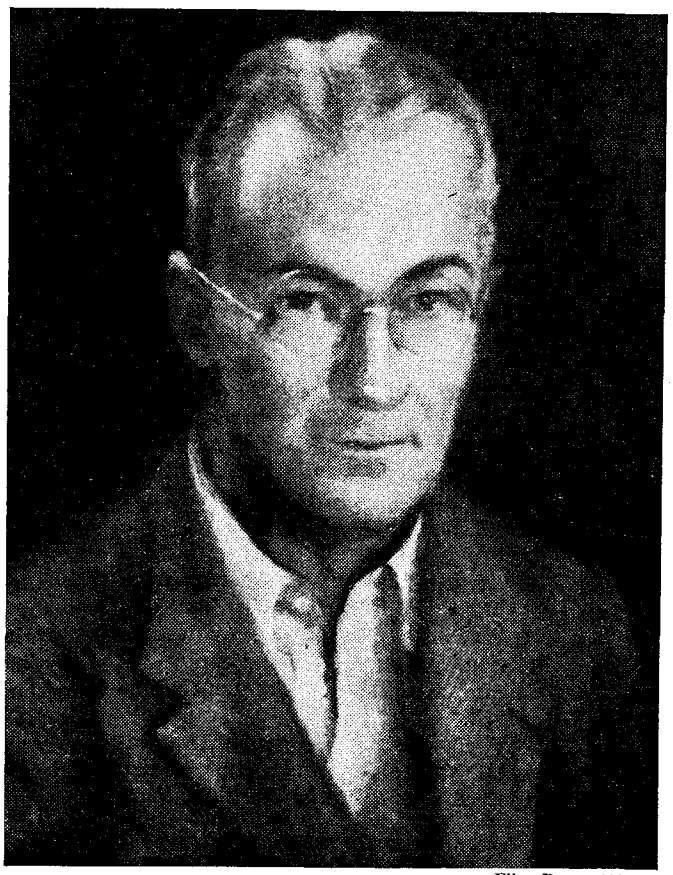
I well remember, for example, how neatly he got back at me for an unfavorable notice I had written about a play of his, which one I now forget. Phil was presiding at a dinner given for Professor Baker at the Yale Club. Both of us, being housebroken, had taken pains not to mention either the play or the notice. When the time came for him to introduce me, he did so by telling the story of an enormous police dog who was running as fast as his long legs could carry him away from a tiny Pekinese in full pursuit. Another police dog, as large as the first, witnessed this odd chase and managed to catch up with his friend. "Why, in heaven's name," he asked, "should a big brute like you be running away from that miserable little Pekinese?" "Don't you know," panted the first police dog, "that that little Pekinese has the coldest nose in town?" Although he flattered my nose, I got the point. So did everyone else.

There are any number of good reasons for resenting critics. But Phil's resentment always seemed to me to possess a special validity. He was a meticulous craftsman, a stylist in his dialogue who used the language lovingly, precisely, and with originality. More accurately, he was an artist in the proudest, hence least fancy, sense of the word. He had scant respect, therefore, for the serviceable clichés of journalism. His impatience was instinctive with its quick, often clumsy writing. He at once distrusted and disliked the precipitous ease, the thundering finality, and the occasional exhibitionism of its judgments.

If critics were not exactly Phil's dish, neither was Broadway. He was a person who scored his successes there without ever surrendering to its limitations. He stood apart from—and above—the brassy competence and spiritual emptiness of the commercial theatre. "Show biz" was never his business. He was a dramatist whose pride in his craft was genuine. The telegraphy we call playwriting is so special a form that most dramatists get along nicely without writing, at least in the literary sense that writing ordinarily implies. Phil was different. He was both a man of the theatre and a man of letters. One of the unique and beckoning characteristics of his plays was that they were written no less than playwritten.

PHIL'S thoroughness as a craftsman I came to recognize even at Harvard. I was a stagestruck sophomore when first we met, and he a graduate student from Yale. I was then nourishing the misconception that I could act and was to appear in Professor Baker's production of a fledgling effort of Phil's known, somewhat regrettably, as "A Punch for Judy." Phil had already had one year in Cambridge with Baker. When "A Punch for Judy" went into rehearsal, he was working in New York in order to be able to come back to Harvard for a second year.

Long before Phil appeared in person for the final run-through, all of us in the cast had come to feel his personality. The bulletin board in Massachusetts Hall was studded with his detailed instructions about the habits, tastes, and personal lives of the characters we were supposed to be playing. The postman was kept busy bringing us letters from New York filled with no less minute background information. We were told whether the people we were impersonating would use Colgate or Pebecco toothpaste. We learned about their aptitude for bridge and their attitude towards Robert W. Service and Edna St. Vincent Millay. We were given their golf



—*Ellen Barry* (1948).

Philip Barry—"a black tie never kept him from being unconventional."

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scores, briefed on their politics and finances, and in general supplied with the kind of dossier we now associate with the FBI. Obviously, Phil's characters lived for him before the first curtain rose and continued to live after the final one had fallen.

Then one night there was Phil himself; Phil on hand to judge the effect of his letters and the effectiveness of his efforts and ours. He sat next to Professor Baker and, although shy, was none the less assured. He was sandy-haired then; the smile into which his tight, thin lips would spread was charming; his blue eyes, though capable of coldness, were, as they always remained, exceptionally bright. If we found the evening an ordeal, so did he. No one, however, could have asked for a more appreciative audience. In his nervousness he laughed so uproariously at his own jokes that it was only when the run-through was over and he began consulting his copious notes that we realized what a perfectionist he was and that none of our ineptitudes had escaped his attention.

"A Punch for Judy," unlisted in "Who's Who in America," was, as I have indicated, the work of a novice. Even so, it was a script which was brightened here and there by those felicities which were to become the trademark of Phil's work. During his next year at Cambridge he proved that he had ceased to be an amateur by writing "You and I," which won for him the Herndon Prize, his first professional production in New York, and immediate recognition.

Phil could easily have gone on (most dramatists would have done so) writing such spirited comedies about privileged worldlings as "Paris Bound," "Holiday," or "The Philadelphia Story." These were perhaps Phil's most successful plays. They are certainly the ones popularly associated with his name. They had sparkle, finish, bounce. Although glib and sometimes mannered in their phrasing, their charm was real, their originality unmistakable, and their tenderness a quality which neither their laughter nor their sophistication could obscure. Plainly they were what a wide and properly admiring public wanted. If their characters had a grand time playing games, they gave most spectators the same grand time by doing so.

With equal ease Phil could, no doubt, have continued to write affectionate or probing studies such as "In a Garden," "Tomorrow and Tomorrow," or "The Animal Kingdom." These dealt wittily and compassionately with threatened marriages among the well-subsidized. They, too, were scripts which won their large

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and enthusiastic audiences. They were blessed with that whimsical individuality in both expression and feeling which were as special to Barry, Philip, as they were to Barrie, J. M.

But Phil, pleased as he was by his successes, was always proudest of his failures. He was a highly complicated person, not one man but many men who, because of their very differences, were constantly at war with one another. Phil was as serious at heart as he was gay on the surface. He was at once a conformist and a non-conformist, a sophisticate and a romantic. He was a good American from Rochester who never ceased to be Irish. The accent of his spirit, regardless of the accent of his speech, remained Gaelic. The fey quality was there, the ability to see the moon at midday. He had the Irish gift for both anger and sweetness, and the Irish ferment in his soul. He was a Catholic whose thinking was unorthodox and restless. Even in his comedies, when apparently he was being audacious, he employed the means of Congreve to preach sermons against divorce which would have won a Cardinal's approval.

IN THE manner of his most typical characters Phil chose to live as a worldling. Like them he was to be found on Park Avenue, in Paris, London, Antibes, Cannes, Easthampton, Hobe Sound, or Watch Hill. Yet the world of fashion in which he moved, in spite of offering him comforts and amenities that he prized, never satisfied his interests or nourished what was forever questing and perturbed in his nature. If he enjoyed the luxuries of that world, he despised its stuffiness. His dwelling in it did not prevent him from seeing through it. At home as he was in its plush apartments, its villas, and its cabañas, he never accepted its values. Though pursued by Society, he was also pursued by the Furies. The contentment he found in opulent surroundings only bred discontent within him. This discontent kept him from ever growing stodgy and was responsible for some of his most interesting experiments.

When he started to write, life was far simpler than it now is. How much simpler it was is made clear by the problems which agitated the characters in his earlier plays. They were concerned with what was then referred to as "expressing themselves." Aside from the question of divorce, the most agonizing decision some of them had to make was whether they would go into business or follow Art (with a capital "A," naturally). Even these characters, however, in plays correctly welcomed as comedies, confessed their unhappiness in a revealing manner. Again and again they were able to face life only by retreating into the past. Almost always their escape from the realities was to flee to an attic studio, a nursery left untouched, or a room redecorated for a particular reunion so as to summon memories.

One of Phil's many fine traits was that he refused to be atrophied by success. As early as 1925, when he wrote "In a Garden," it was clear that in his own quiet-voiced and courageous way he was as much of an experimentalist as those noisier and more sensational figures whose breaks from convention consist largely of surrenders to stunts. Innovation is usually supposed to be the contribution of the wild-eyed and the long-haired who are only happy at esthetic barricades. Phil, as I once tried to point out, was one of the few Americans who could write a comedy of manners without having to rent a tuxedo. But a black tie never kept him from being unconventional.

Though it was a box-office failure, one of the most delectable fantasies written in our time on the subject of the eternal cleavage between progress and reaction was "White Wings" (1926). In it Phil elected to state his theme in terms of a proud family of street cleaners who for years had followed the horses—with a broom, of course. The arch-enemy of these street cleaners, the people whose activities inescapably denied them their employment, was a family of early motorists. Phil followed "White Wings" with "John," a Biblical play about John the Baptist, which in spite of being another failure was another indication of his bravery.

Ultimately, Phil the metaphysical

Choice

By Edith Warner Johnson

THERE is the land,
There is the seed of evil and good,
There is the hand of the sower
And the sower's choice of the seed.

There is the sun and the rain
And the clean wind blown
Across furroughs
Where the seed is sown.
There is pain
And fruitage of toil
And the sun above
Warming the soil.

There is the land,
Always the land—
There is the need
And the sower's hand
And his choice of the seed.

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seeker after first causes, who seemed to have so little in common with Phil the writer of society comedies, produced "Hotel Universe" (1930) and "Here Come the Clowns" (1938). It never seemed to me that in either of these more ambitious plays he quite succeeded in doing what he had set out to do. He may not have lost his way after a promising first act in "Hotel Universe" but I must confess I did. Even so, I was conscious—as who could help but be—of the growth which this attempt showed in him. When Phil sought to state the dilemmas of the modern world in terms of a vaudeville theatre in "Here Come the Clowns," I found myself confused though interested. All of us who are reviewers are condemned to living with our regrets. One of mine has always been that I failed to recognize in "Here Come the Clowns" the virtues which, I have come to see, far outweigh its faults.

The biggest things for which Phil reached may have eluded his grasp. He has always had my complete respect, however, because of having risked the perils of overreaching himself. All too few are blessed with this daring; all too few are ignited by the torments of the larger agonies. The fact that Phil was sensitive to these anguishes and had the hardihood to try to give them dramatic statement must be counted among the many reasons why his going represents a genuine loss even as his living represented a distinguished and irreplaceable gain.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

FICTION

(Continued from page 18)

struction upon the Jacksons: turning the sisters one against the other, turning the head of the boy, Pen, too, and dissolving his serious ambitions away in laughter. It devolves upon Hannah herself, at last, to face up to Noel and save her own soul, and her sister's, from him.

This is Miss Beresford-Howe's story, unfolded with full consciousness of its gravity and implications—but with less consciousness, I think, of the fine complexity of character necessarily involved. At the heart of this kind of story is complexity, the ambivalence of purposes and desires; and the writer must thread her way among them for the clues to reality. Miss Beresford-Howe's people are too stiff, monolithic, to be real. In particular is this true of Noel Carter, the leavening force in the drama. He is plainly crass, openly conscienceless. He declares his purposes in ringing tones like the villain in the melodrama, yet everybody looks self-consciously the other way and falls into his trap. Will is too helpless, Laurel too gullible. Hannah herself is the only person alive in a room of cardboard figures. The story suffers from this simplicity and from its trappings of melodrama. —N. L.R.

THE WILL AND THE WAY, by J. M. Scott. Dutton. $2.75. Obviously, you can't take it with you but why, after all, torture your heirs? Does that cause mirth or satisfaction in Paradise? For my part, I should, with convinced omnipotence, relegate all such practical jokers as Mr. Scott presents to purgatory at the least. There may be no evil in these posthumous pranks but there is much to irritate.

An eccentric, big-income-bracket, ancient Scotchman suddenly shuffles off this mortal coil. He leaves his fortune to whichever of his five nephews finds it and, finding it, has the appreciation to recognize it. In tangible assets it comes to £50,000. Spiritually it lies within. Morals abound. Clues, confusion, disguises, and false hopes trouble the searchers let loose in Switzerland. Ladies in costume cavort up and down the icy Alps, while in the valleys treasure awaits. It is resolved at long last, though far from equitably.

Might appear less effortful on the screen. Devaluation, as it now is, seems here to stay.

—CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN.

DEPARTURE AND OTHER STORIES, by Howard Fast. Little, Brown. $3. Mr. Fast gives us a liberal mixture in this new collection of stories, and every time you might think you have him summed up the next story will be something different again. But let it be said that he never fails to be fluently readable and that always (or almost always) he has a story to tell.

Out of these nineteen stories, though, certain groupings can be dis-

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Jim Hawkins. 2. Oedipus. 3. Hercule Poirot. 4. Natty Bumppo. 5. Godiva. 6. Athos. 7. Laocoon. 8. Simon Templar. 9. Wendy Darling. 10. Oz. 11. Rhett Butler. 12. Tweedledum. 13. Hyman Kaplan. 14. Yetive. ENGLISH NOVELIST: John Galsworthy.

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cerned. There are three, for instance, that deal with the frontier. I think it is a true accomplishment to be able to give the reader the feeling, as economically as Mr. Fast does, that he is in another time. Mr. Fast doesn't use the sort of trick common to many historical novelists: no costume description or bits of Americana. He just gives you human beings and the mood and feel of a time and place.

Another grouping that might be noticed is that containing the kind of story that shows contemporary New Yorkers caught in a delicate and self-revelatory situation. Thus, in "The Gentle Virtue" a bachelor of thirty-five falls in love very sensitively only to fall out the moment he discovers the object of his love to have a hidden cancer. In story ideas as good as these the irony bites deep, and one must admire the brevity with which the incident, the development of it, and the outcome are handled. But one could wish, too, that the main character in each case was a trifle less generalized.

I found the kind of emotion that infuses the title story, "Departure," on the phony side. There is a certain kind of sentimentality still adhering to the literary treatment of the Spanish Civil War that can occasionally set my teeth on edge. And "Departure" has it. Flag waving of almost any kind is still flag waving. Now and then Mr. Fast gives way to temptation and does it.

—Hollis Alpert.

THE SLEEPING TREES, by Gilbert Maxwell. Little, Brown. $3. The novel concerning a wedding in a small Southern town is becoming almost a genre, with such worthy representatives as Eudora Welty's "Delta Wedding" and Carson McCullers's "Member of the Wedding" setting a hard pace for the late comers. Gilbert Maxwell's contribution, "The Sleeping Trees," doesn't stand up to these, but it's an admirable first novel for all that.

With a minimum of contrivance, Mr. Maxwell has made the wedding day of Elizabeth Shepherd and Tony Clark (she the divorced daughter of Malby, Georgia's "first family"; he a wealthy young veteran from Charleston) a day in which almost every protagonist reaches the zenith or the nadir of their far from stereotyped existences. At the same time he has drawn a pretty telling picture of a small town (pop. 3,000) in the South with its "niggardly politics, intrigue, gossip, intolerance, kindness, generosity—all the meanest and best in a nutshell."

From the first morning's gossip of the wedding to the moment before the wedding march that night, with an occasional dip into the past, Mr. Maxwell has evolved a story of many people. He has found time to sketch with dramatic skill the death of a poor, demented old man; a fearful tent revival; an almost-too-late love affair between a middle-aged schoolteacher and the Episcopal minister. And he has thrown in as well the device of the pretty, illegitimate child being substituted for the still-born one. No, this day wasn't a dull one for the sleepy South Georgia town. And even if the people talk like few South Georgians you're likely to encounter, for all their startling eccentricities, they do think and act and achieve their various ends in a startlingly lifelike way.

—Frederick Rutledge Smith, Jr.

FRATERNALLY YOURS, by Henry von Rhau. Houghton Mifflin. $2.75. It is hard to determine whether the author of this novel was trying to write a humorous book with serious overtones or a serious book with humorous overtones. However, whatever his purpose, he has not succeeded. The result is a strange melange of murder, mayhem, and slapstick.

The book attempts to deal with political corruption, gangsterism, and labor racketeering. The principal character, Big Sol Wexler, is described in the blurb on the jacket as "an American Falstaff." This, to put it politely, is a bit of an overstatement. Then we have the gangster leader, described by the optimistic publishers as "the macabre Gilkie," who delights in pushing lighted cigars into peoples' faces; the shyster lawyer, Shapiro; the noble District Attorney Rowley, and as unpleasant an assortment of miscellaneous characters as one can find between the covers of a book.

Mr. Von Rhau seems to have cut his dramatis personae from the pages of the funnies and comic strips. They are stock figures derived from the lower reaches of fiction and the movies, and they bear little resemblance to reality.

—Newman Levy.

Literally Speaking

By George Cole and David West

Edmund Waller: "On a Girdle"

THAT which her slender waist confin'd,
Shall now my joyfull temples bind;
No Monarch but would give his Crowne
His Armes might doe what this has done.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

KILT IN ACTION

MUCH against our better judgment, we got up early of a recent Sunday to have a pre-embarkation chat with Sir Andrew Murray, the Mayor of Edinburgh, who was on his way back to the land of the haggis and the heather. Sir Andrew, whose official title is not really Mayor but Lord Provost, had spent a fortnight in North America spreading good will all over the place in preparation for the Edinburgh Festival of 1950.

We asked him about the plans for the festival this coming year and Sir Andrew said, "Oh dear, oh dear, dear, dear," making a snare drum of his tongue and palette, and letting the r's rumble out like snap rolls. While here he had invited the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to appear in Scotland next summer. His repetitive exclamations, he explained, derived from certain difficulties encountered in arranging the appearance of the orchestra abroad. He was not permitted, he said, to explain further upon penalty of queering the whole deal.

For anyone who has missed the Sadler's Wells Ballet in New York, Sir Andrew was radiantly happy to announce that the company will definitely appear at this year's festival. The tentative program also includes the Royal Philharmonic; the BBC, Scottish, and Hallé orchestras of Britain; the Scala Orchestra, of Milan; the Statsradiofonien Orchestra, of Denmark, and the Orchestra National de la Radiodiffusion Française. Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir John Barbirolli, Victor de Sabata, Fritz Busch, and Roger Désormière will conduct.

The coming summer will mark the fourth year of the festival, which, Sir Andrew estimates, has been drawing a quarter of a million people every year. He is going to try to see to it, he said, that people here will be able to book tickets for the festival at the same time the general sale is opened to the Edinburgh citizen.

Sir Andrew, after the tradition, is a sturdy Scot, with big hands, a strong face, gray hair, and black eyebrows. He was done up for the trip back home in a conservative blue suit, white shirt with starched collar, blue knit tie, black socks, and a gold watch chain. While in town, he said, he thought he ought to take a pass at snaring the next Plenary Session of the General Assembly for Edinburgh. It has already met in London, Paris, Geneva, and New York. "I offered them Edinburgh," the Lord Provost told us, "figuring that was the biggest bribe I could put before them." If Sir Andrew could have signed the General Assembly it would have meant 5,000 people staying in Edinburgh for three or four months right after the festival closes. "They asked me," Sir Andrew said, "if a city of 500,000 could meet the needs of the General Assembly. 'Wouldn't we be eating all your food?' they wanted to know." The Lord Provost took on a sour expression. "They imagine we're all living on haggis," he said. "The Government supplies an ample allowance of rationed goods, and I dare say we've spent three million pounds improving our hotels. Our children today are taller and their physical fitness has not suffered from austerity. I am myself," he said, tapping his chest lightly, "an example of Scottish feeding."

With that broadside the Lord Provost confided that he had also done some extra-curricular plumping for the Scottish tourist industry while here. "We're terribly anxious to have the North American come over to us, but I must say we're also anxious to have our own people come over here and see how you live. Scotland has something to offer in all the twelve months," said Sir Andrew, slipping into the chamber of commerce talk which he had delivered to Rotary clubs and St. Andrew's societies in the United States and Canada. "But if I had my choice I should pick May or June, or alternately in September I should go up the East Coast to Caithness, Sutherland, or Berriedale, where the Duke of Portland has his place. In the month of May I should go to Skye when the MacLeod clan gathers in the castle of Dunvegen led by the chief of the clan, MacLeod of MacLeod."

On New Year's Day, which is called Hogmanay and celebrated with more fervor than Christmas in Scotland, the Scots still follow the ancient tradition of first-footing. Sir Andrew pronounced it like "fast-fooding." When one goes first-footing one visits one's friends, bringing along a lump of coal (for good luck) or a piece of short bread (so there will always be food in the larder). "Every house, every door is open," Sir Andrew said with local pride, "and I wish Americans could partake of the ceremony. It might dispel the idea that a Scotsman is a fellow with a haggis under one arm and a bottle of whisky under the other. Nine out of every eleven bottles of whisky are going for export anyway."

SOME days later word reached our desk that the King's own kiltmaker was in town, and to get a secondary opinion we dashed up to see him. He turned out to be W. J. Kinloch Anderson, a man who wore a short, brush moustache and a baggy tweed suit. He is one of the principals in the firm of William Anderson & Sons, Ltd., Scotland, which makes the kilts worn by the present King of England. "When the Royal Family have been patronizing one firm with some consistency," Mr. Anderson explained, "the Royal Chamberlain issues a warrant. In our case it says, 'William Anderson & Sons, Ltd., Scotland, are Tailors and Kiltmakers to His Majesty King George VI.' A notice appears in the London *Gazette*, and it sets you up as a somebody else."

We were possessed of what we took to be a rather natural curiosity about the King's habits in the matter of kilt-wearing, an interest we conveyed to Mr. Anderson. "There is an etiquette about all this," Mr. Anderson said rather hastily, "It's a very delicate matter. Now, I wouldn't presume to discuss with you where you got your socks or how you wear them. (Plain navy blue wool, Macy's, $1.29, and we wear them with garters.) The King does in fact wear the kilt as everyday dress while in Scotland." We asked how many kilts hung in the King's wardrobe, and Mr. Anderson said, "Just no comment." He did let slip, however, the information that while shooting in the hills of Balmoral or for evening dress the King might wear the tartan of the Stewart clan. The Royal Family also has its

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own private tartan called the Balmoral, a gray pattern with red overchecks, which was designed by Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria.

When a tailor makes a kilt he takes what Mr. Anderson calls "a round-the-waist measure and a round-the-seat measure." The length of the kilt varies with the height of the wearer. These days, the King's kilt-maker said, the kilt is being worn shorter—a new highland look. "Used to come down to the center of the knee," Mr. Anderson explained, "but a long kilt looks clumsy. The King himself wears them fairly short. It is just a trend of fashion." The back of the kilt is actually formed to fit the posterior by a method which Mr. Anderson refused to reveal. "Trick of the trade," he said darkly. When opened out the kilt measures one and a half times the waist measurement. The first fold is called the under apron, and the wrap-around fold is called the top apron. Because of the intricate pleating an average kilt takes eight or nine yards of cloth.

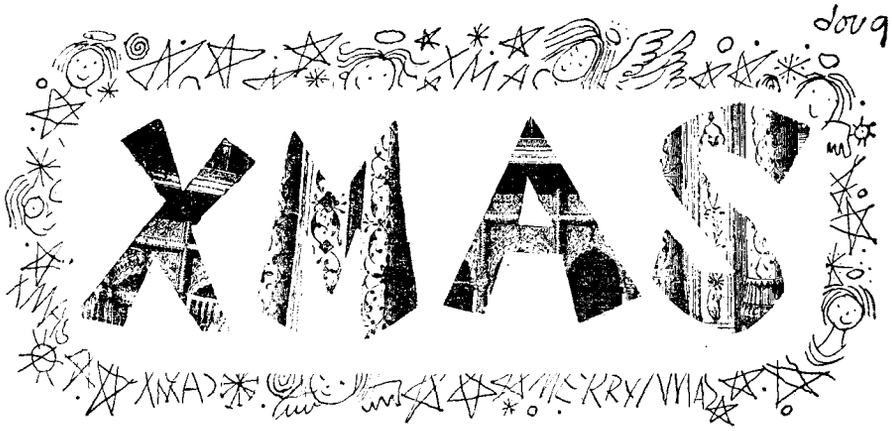
"The use of the kilt is increasing in Scotland," Mr. Anderson proclaimed, "because it has been proven adaptable through the ages. If you cast your eyes back to 1745, people wore powdered wigs and the kilt looked all right. It still looks all right with today's fashions."

Mr. Anderson said he hoped American tourists in Scotland would exert some caution in appraising the kilt. "People in Scotland wearing the kilt do not consider themselves in fancy dress," he said. Nor should Americans expect to see the entire male population wearing the costume. "I do know several men who don't own any trousers, but that is unusual. After all, if you go to Texas will you see everyone wearing a ten-gallon hat?"

In the matter of tartan terminology, the garment is called "the kilt," but if you have three or four they become "kilts." One wears "the kilt," never "kilts," or, heaven forbid, "a pair of kilts." The pattern of the cloth is never called a "plaid," but a "tartan." A plaid is the name for the bunch of tartan kilt-wearers sometimes wear thrown over their shoulder. The question most frequently put to Mr. Anderson is the classic about what is worn under the kilt. Said the King's kilt-maker, "In practice, for evening wear particularly, men always wear short pants for the sake of decency. The use of under trews is less common in the army."

We are in no danger of the kilt becoming fashionable in the United States, Mr. Anderson believes. He doesn't think the climate is suitable for it. "Not that the kilt isn't the most comfortable garment made. You're gripped tightly where you ought to be and your legs are free. There are occasions, of course, when the kilt is unsuitable. I wouldn't like to go skiing in a kilt, for instance."

—Horace Sutton.



TRAVELERS' TALES

NORTH AFRICAN NOTEBOOK, by Robin Maugham. Harcourt, Brace, $3. Some personal observation about how the war left things in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, which becomes, in effect, a survey of present-day colonial administration as practised by the Spanish, French, and British. None of the present European techniques in the Arab world comes off without some serious criticism, and there are some scandalous stories about prewar Italian behavior in Libya. Mr. Maugham, a British veteran of North Africa and a nephew of W. Somerset, collected his material on an often harrowing jeep trip across the top of the continent. His tour started in Spain, and the book opens with some of the first travel notes out of that country. "Spain is not Fascist," Mr. Maugham observes. "The rulers look and think differently from those they govern." Seems to me we've heard that song before.

THE ENGLISH SCENE TODAY, by S. P. B. Mais. Macmillan. $3. A reappraisal of England now that the Luftwaffe has come and gone and the debris been swept away. Every locale is viewed in relation to the effect of World War II. Mr. Mais takes you to Bristol, where 1,300 people died in air raids, and its Temple Church, which had a leaning tower but is no more; to Plymouth, which withstood 600 alerts and fifty-nine bombings. Said the German radio on May 4, 1942, "Exeter is a jewel, and we have destroyed it." Says Mais in 1949, "Exeter is neither a jewel nor was it completely destroyed." He catalogues the sights that are left, and is properly sentimental about what the tide of war has swept away. Some personal interludes reflect the current times in England, and some pleasant half-tones brighten the pages.

—H. S.

THE CRAZY GLASSPECKER, by David Dodge. Random. $2.75. By now it is clear that David Dodge is passionately determined to be flippant and funny all over Latin America. This time he dodges around Peru and Bolivia though mostly he stays put in the mountain paradise (with humorous drawbacks) of Arequipa, where he became involved with a persistent but frustrated glasspecker, skull-and-cross-bones rum, fiestas, carnivals, sellers of buried treasure maps, earthquakes real and imagined, a shrunken jívaro head, braying burros, and his unpredictable daughter. He is slap-dash funny on side trips to the impressive grandeurs of Cuzco and Machu Picchu, to La Paz, Puno, Iquitos, and other places. If you have ever been through a three-day highland carnival—or even if you haven't—you will be in stitches over the barbaric achievement. If you have ever sat by your wife on a train and received a loving telegram from black-eyed Conchita that you are the father of an eight-pound baby, you will realize that even a man called Dodge can't live up to his name all the time. Fortunately, proof of mistaken identity came to his rescue.

In this book, Mr. Dodge has learned Spanish, and there is more basic feeling for the texture of the land and the people, more light and shade, more pathos, one of the tear-jerking requisites for true humor. Only at one point does bitterness creep through his hilarity—when he tears the wings off Peruvian travel red-tape. But, brother, when Dodge gets to Chile (about book after next) he will discover a land which spends vast sums to promote tourist travel yet has the worst heart-breaking regulations on the planet. That should be the saddest, funniest book yet.

—Carleton Beals.

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the Phoenix Nest

SUPPOSE . . .

SIX months, the military give us,
before the world
is theirs again.
So—suppose we who love life,
love peace beyond any taking,
should say: Kill us, we are not
afraid of sister Death-of-the body.
Kill us—you can make a carnival of it
in Madison Square Garden, and
invite the world. The old Roman
lion-throwing will be applesauce
compared to this. Let the men of ill
will think up vast fancy
ways of slow torture. (Cola Pops can
hold a contest.)
Buchenwald, Hiroshima would be
mere bagatelles if minds were really
given to this. And how much
better actually than another
war: A SUPER WHOOPER
TOURIST ATTRACTION.
One that could make history . . .

—NORMA LAY.

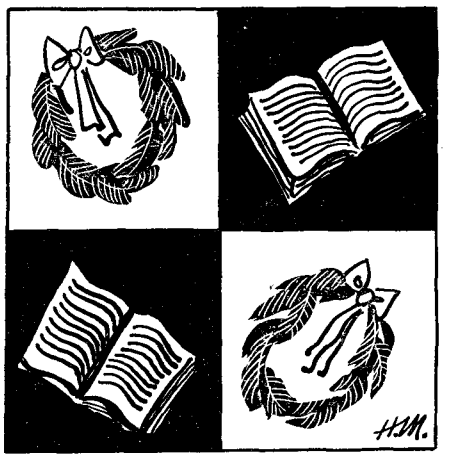
* * *

MacDonald & Co., Ltd., of 37 Madison Ave., Room 220, New York 10, N. Y., are distributing a personal anthology, "These Would I Choose," by Alec Waugh, published in London by Sampson Low. Save that it culls from both poetry and prose, this is the sort of anthology with running commentary as to its relationship to the life of the compiler which Field Marshal Viscount Wavell did so successfully in "Other Men's Flowers." Mr. Waugh, by the way, includes Julian Grenfell's "Into Battle," part of which I heard Lord Wavell recite at the recent dinner of the Academy of American Poets, when he also excerpted from "Magpies in Picardy," by T. P. Cameron Wilson. A short poem he did not recite on that occasion, but which is in his collection, is by the Irish poet Oliver St. John Gogarty, who was also at the dinner. I am sure Mr. Gogarty will not mind if I quote it here:

THE BOON COMPANION

If medals were ordained for drinks,
Or soft communings with a minx,
Or being at your ease belated,
By heavens, you'd be decorated!
And not Alcmena's chesty son
Have room to put more ribbands on!

The Field Marshal pleased members of a certain family (although he did not know they were all there) by praising the "John Brown's Body" of Stephen Vincent Benét and quoting some of the best lines descriptive of John Brown, save that I, as a brother, flinched a little when instead of saying "the black ewe's fastness" he made it "the black goat's fastness." I don't know why but the ewe is just the proper animal in that line, and none other will do. It reminds me a little of the time when the late Harriet Monroe referred to an animal in a poem by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson as "that noble bitch" and I had to remind her that said animal was, in this case, actually a goat. I once also had to remind Burton Ras-



coe that the "turtle" in Shakespeare's famous poem, coupling it with the phoenix, was not a reptile of the order Chelonia, but the original turtle dove whence sailors had corrupted the name through the French *tortue*. In other words, a bird! I must say that Burton took it very well! . . .

I'll put Waugh up with Wavell as two original and different anthologies. Few know two of my other favorite anthologies of the verse that was modern yesterday: Sir Henry Newbolt's "New Paths on Helicon" and J. C. (Sir John) Squire's "Selections from Modern Poets." But who today remembers W. J. Turner's poem on "The Lion," John Freeman's "The Body," Lascelles Abercrombie's "Epilogue," Alfred Noyes's "Mountain Laurel," or Siegfried Sassoon's "Grandeur of Ghosts," unusual and beautiful poems, all of them; fierce ardor in all of them. . . .

A book of poems for ghost lovers, "The Creaking Stair," by Elizabeth Coatsworth (Coward-McCann), with jacket and graphic accompaniment by the inimitable W. A. Dwiggins! A choice book. *The Saturday Review of Literature* had the honor to print at least four of these, including one of the eeriest and best, "The Lady," an idea perfectly rendered. One is from a former book, "Fox Footprints." Louis Untermeyer has anthologized "The Lady" and also "Daniel Webster's Horses." This is a book that may be overlooked and should not—by any means!

Come, call your cat
And fortify your broom,
there's need to travel—

There is magic in these pages—and the fire burns blue! . . .

Another rare thing: a new little book from Alfred A. Knopf by the Mildred Cram who wrote that small classic "Forever." It is called "The Promise." Here is another otherworldly writer of a different kind. Don't miss "The Promise," as I hope you didn't miss "Forever"! . . .

Lastly, something that makes an American feel ashamed. J. Parnell Thomas, onetime melodramatic chairman of the Un-American Activities Committee, is now a convicted felon. His sixty-year-old secretary was forced by her employer into dishonesty. The facts speak for themselves. And this was the relentless pursuer of alleged subversive activities. All the while—! . . . Let us turn to poetry and better, cleaner things!

* * *

SURVIVAL IN SHALOTT

The halls are silent now, but on my
loom
Stretches a vast imperishable world—
A swallow coasting on wind with
dark wings furled,
White chord of birch, dark chord of
pine descending
Arpeggiatura to the listening river.

Say to the mirrored horseman that I
never
Drifted downstream, but that forever
dazzled
I waste the substance of my days in
dream
Where light dissolves in music and
my words
Flash southward down the pathway
of the birds.

—ROSALIND LEVINE.

* * *

EVERYWHERE, CHRISTMAS TONIGHT

In cannibal-land as like as not
Christmas finds a Santa in every pot!

—VIOLETTE SEALOCK.

* * *

—WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING *Recording Technique, Surface*	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT

THE PIANIST'S STUDY SHELF

IN MEMORIAM ROSITA RENARD. (Entire Carnegie Hall recital, Jan. 19, 1949.) Society of Friends of Music, Bogotá, Colombia. (2 12" *LP's*) *(Available at Gramophone Shop, 18 E. 48th St., N. Y.)*		A significant development in the swing to LP recording—a new kind of documentary music history. Instantly audible evidence here of a very great woman pianist. (She died a few months later.) Big, masculine personality, one of those rare performers through whom one hears directly to the composer without hindrance. Piano sound is unusually good, in spite of some badly overcut passages. Applause runs through lead grooves between the bands of music—nicely handled. Minimum of coughs. Program includes Bach, B flat Partita; Mozart, Sonata A minor (K. 310), Rondo in D; Mendelssohn, "Variations Sérieuses"; six Chopin Etudes; Ravel, "Valses Nobles"; Debussy, "Danse." Should be on every piano lover's shelf.
BEETHOVEN: SONATAS IN A, Op. 101; A FLAT, Op. 110. Leonard Shure. Vox *LP*: VLP 6120	No tops in piano recording here. The Columbias are markedly different: Sandor's piano is natural, close-to, but the liveness "space" is unnatural, a good deal of percussion in high notes. Arrau is closer still, deader; percussion peaks much reduced, tone smoother, bass stronger. Improvement—but far from ideal yet. The Vox is inferior, a thin, colorless tone with false percussive sounds, poor transients.	These rate musically the reverse of technical rating. Shure is a sensitive Beethoven player on records, even in this so-so recording. Sandor is a bit jumpy, unsustained; but I like his Beethoven, prefer Shure's. Arrau, no doubt the best technician, seems to me cold, somehow inexpressive in spite of flawless outward playing. There's more piano than Beethoven in his "Waldstein."
BEETHOVEN: SONATA IN D, Op. 28 ("Pastorale"). Gyorgy Sandor (with "Chopin Recital"). Columbia *LP*: ML 4193 (½)		
BEETHOVEN: SONATA IN C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). Claudio Arrau. Columbia *LP*: ML 2078 (10")		
BRAHMS: SONATA #3 IN F MINOR, Op. 5 (1853). a) Shura Cherkassky Vox *LP*: VLP 6260 b) Julius Katchen London *LP*: LLP 112	The basic piano sound and acoustics good in both, the transferal to LP varies. (Different recording curves—Vox has more highs, less bass.) The London LP is very steady, with good dynamic range, low distortion. The Vox LP wavers occasionally, has some percussive tones with transient distortion.	Brahms at 20—full of rather charming and naive, high-powered romance (beneath it, the solid sense of form we might expect). Both versions are competent; Katchen's (he is 23) seems to me more ingenuously expressive, nearer the music's youthful sense. He is aided by unusually steady recording.

CAPITOL MISCELLANY (THREE SPEED)

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—Edward Tatnall Canby.

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A Christmas Letter

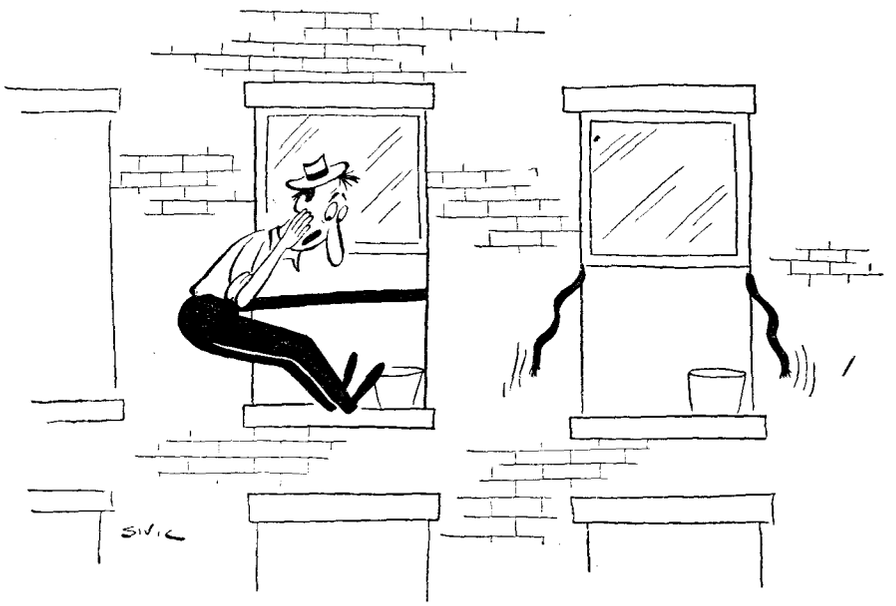
THIS opportunity to greet our DCers I welcome. It serves as a special medium to thank you for the generous messages and loyal support of the year, beyond what very busy working days on DCs have enabled me to do individually. As I have written in substance in the Foreword of Series No. 25, soon to be in your hands, in this our sixteenth year of DCing you puzzlers have grown so astute that it takes me longer to find the appropriate quotation and even longer to amass fitting words. Thus the days are full and so is my correspondence basket. And, as I have moved twice since last May, my files have not caught up with your letters, so that any of the latter labeled "Use in Your Next Article" are not ready to hand.

Let me extend at the outset a warm invitation to all who pass through Middlebury, Vt., in the course of the year to call at 62 N. Pleasant St., directly on the main highway, Route 7, just beyond the town's Main St. Yes, on an impulse, I decided to get away from the confusion that is New York City these days and to drink in my inspiration from the distant but majestic summits of the Adirondacks and the friendly, but nearer, Green Mts. rather than from Carnegie Hall, the Met., and theatre and ballet centers. Of course, I miss friends and family members and much else a large city affords, but I have precious memories to sustain me and I shall be philosophical. By the way, if you haven't read Elliott Merrick's "Green Mountain Farm," you have an unusual treat in store for you.

What in all these years I have hesitated to state in our columns, I have now decided, in order to save your time and energy and mine, to say: Please do not send me your DCs to use in place of mine. I wouldn't use them without paying you, in which case I should lose my vocation. At first I used to solve and return a critique for each DC sent me, but the flood that has accumulated of late overwhelms me. I am always glad to hear that you have experienced the fascination of making a DC, and I have taught hundreds how to evolve them. The drudgery comes when you've made thousands and must try to avoid repetition in quote and principal words, in the incessant check-up for accuracy, and in a hectic pace to meet the publisher's demands. If you like to evolve DCs make them for your friends who have leisure. One of our puzzlers, Mrs. David Baker, Glens Falls, N. Y., has long made DCs for friends in hospitals and for other handicapped literate acquaintances.

In answer to the request of several puzzlers I have included three diagramless DCs in the end of Series No. 25. Some of you, I am aware, have written in opposition to diagramless DCs. They do serve my purpose when a quotation worth while is too long for our diagram when the black squares must be counted. Poetry does not always lend itself when one stanza is too short, two stanzas too long, and even a few lines of the second stanza do not make sense with the first stanza. Then a diagramless DC would be the solution.

At the risk of repetition I should like to defend the "slang" words you accuse me of using too often. When I was a girl slang was a lazy person's refuge, but not so today. As far as I can make out, slang—in my WNI at any rate—consists in expressive expressions not yet in authorized use, and there are hundreds of such words I come across and note for my need. As Walt Whitman thinks in one of his sage utterances, perhaps in "Specimen Days" or "November Boughs"—I've forgotten the exact source—slang is vital to the growth of language, and what is called slang today in many instances will become authorized tomorrow. Gelett Burgess, our Nestor in humor, seems to have a particular hatred for my slang words. And yet I recall when he wrote a Dictionary of Slang and coined such words as *bromide* and *goops*, both expressive today. I wish G. B. would defend his conversion some day in published form and let me know so that I may read the article.



"Gesundheit!"

Until I read in the newspapers of the ninetieth birthday of John Dewey, it didn't occur to me that we can be proud to claim him as a DCer. One day a few years ago I entered the *SRL* office when an official was calling a district messenger to take an *SRL* issue to John Dewey. The office was humming with a phone call just received from that eminent philosopher. It seems that as his week's *SRL* hadn't arrived he had sent them an SOS call for the puzzle in it! Through a note from Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, we learned that she, too, is a DCer. Several current authors have written me recently in appreciation of our having chosen quotations, respectively, from their works for Double-Crostics.

Warmest and most appreciative greetings to all of you for the holiday season!

ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY.
Middlebury, Vt.

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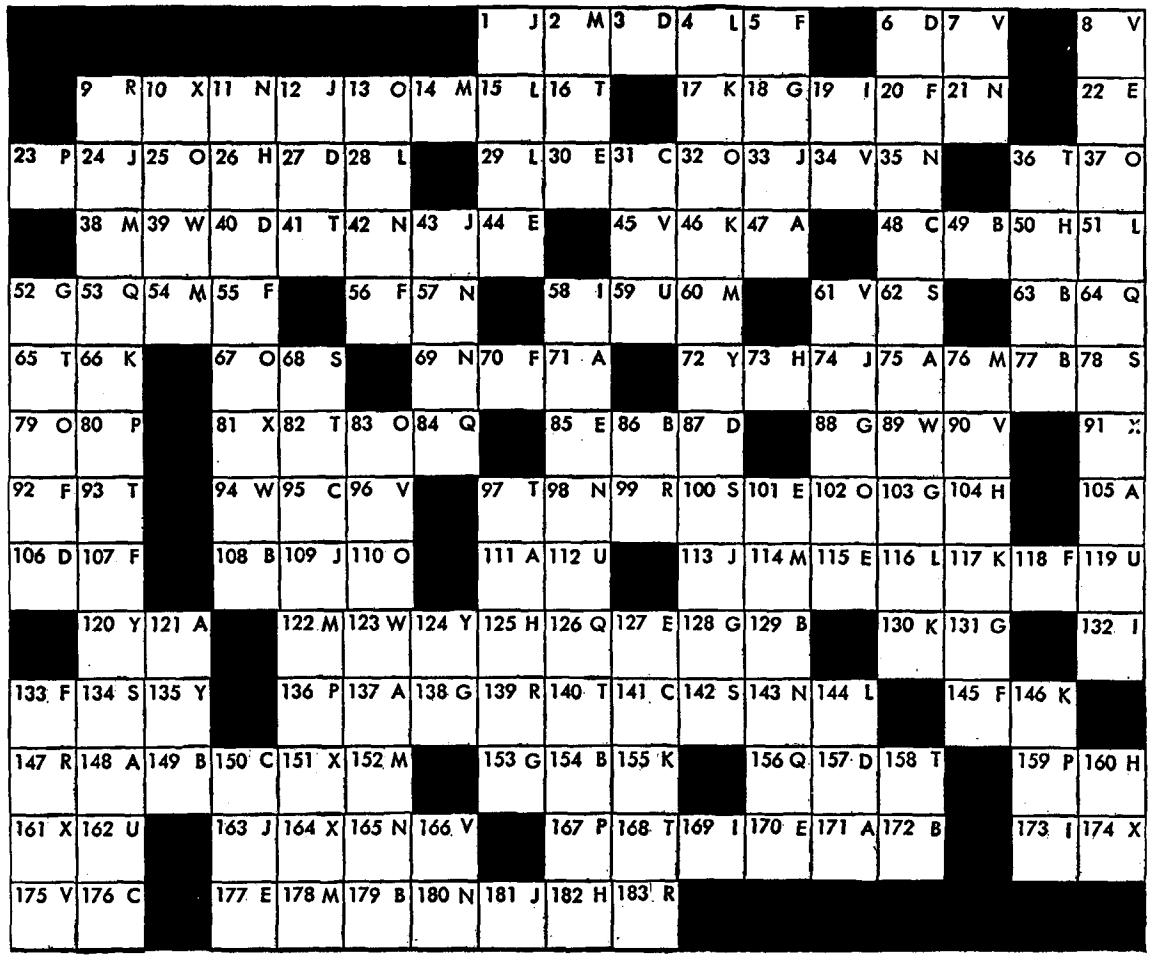
X. Province in Canada whose capital is Toronto.	10 161 81 91 174 151 164
Y. German physician and pioneer bacteriologist (Nobel Prize, 1905, in physiology and medicine; esp. tubercular work).	72 120 124 135



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 34 of this issue.

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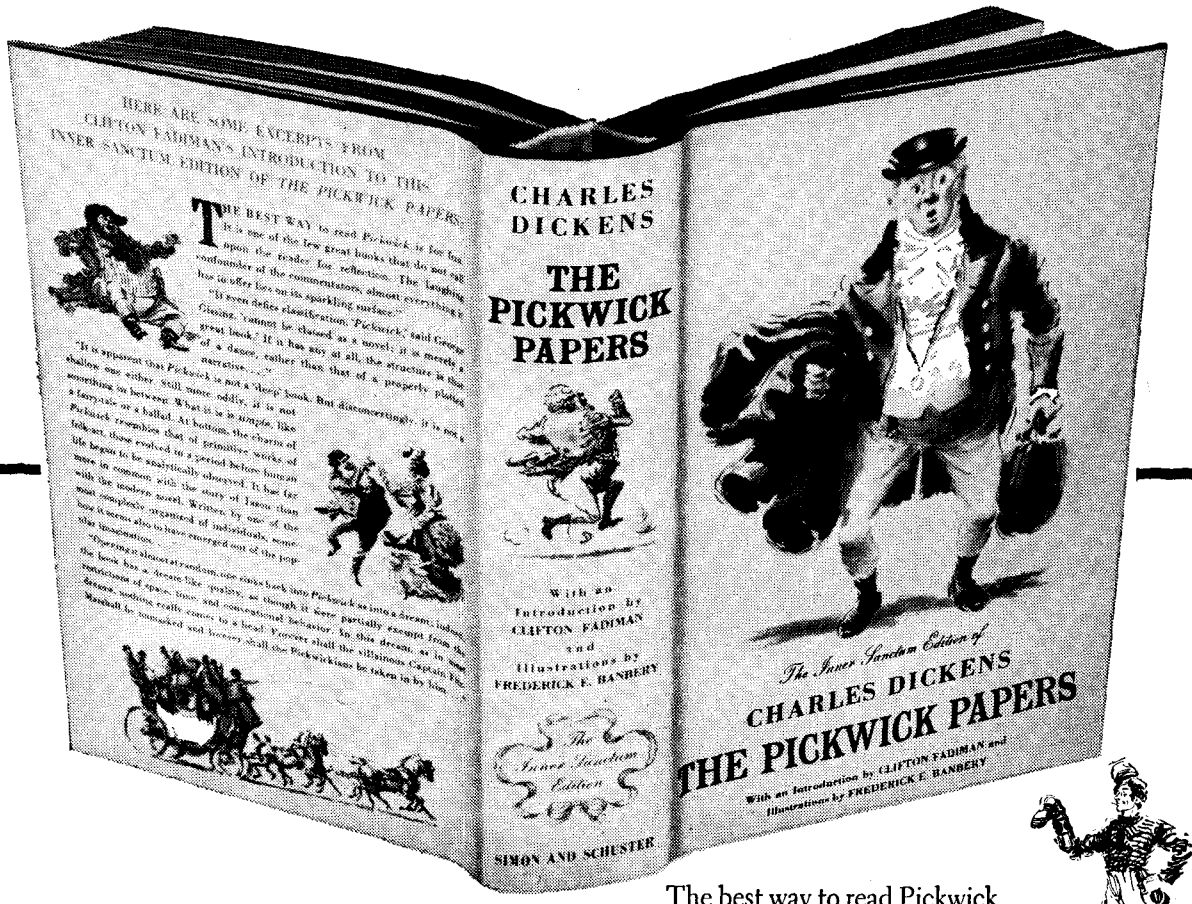
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CHARLES DICKENS
THE PICKWICK PAPERS
With an Introduction by CLIFTON FADIMAN and Illustrations by FREDERICK E. BANBERY
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